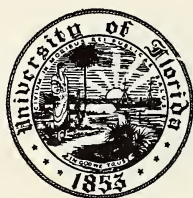


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The Year of the Spaniard

by

HENRY CASTOR

HERE is a roaring, lusty novel of the Spanish-American War that relates the adventures—sometimes funny, sometimes grim—of two young men who had strenuous parts in that bloody, muddled, and exasperating event in our history.

Caleb Hawkins, a handsome, unpredictable, self-assured law student, and Warren Spangler (of the Lancaster Spanglers), an able reporter on the *Philadelphia Ledger*, shared an interest in the social problems of the day—and in the beautiful Susan Brecht. When the *Maine* was suddenly sunk, the yellow journals howled for war; Caleb went as a soldier, Warren as a reporter.

In Tampa they learned the ways of war riotously from the Army and also from such famous authorities as Stephen Crane, Richard Harding Davis, and Stephen Bonsal, all of whom came to watch the show.

Henry Castor re-creates vividly the excitement, tensivity, and drama of this frenetic period along with the people—both big and little—who played such an important part in it.

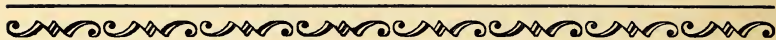


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THE YEAR
OF THE SPANIARD



BOOKS BY HENRY CASTOR

The Year of the Spaniard

The Spanglers



THE YEAR
OF THE SPANIARD

a Novel of 1898
by Henry Castor

DOUBLEDAY & COMPANY, INC., GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK, 1950

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES AT
THE COUNTRY LIFE PRESS, GARDEN CITY, N. Y.

FIRST EDITION

TO ALL MOTHERS AND FATHERS

of my generation who may be
amused at being spear carriers and
off-stage voices in a "historical
novel," and especially to my own.

4-12-50 - Personal - Fla. Union

AUTHOR'S NOTE

In the jargon of the book trade a *historical* novel is one whose action occurs in a setting before those of *period* novels. In other words, there is a penumbra in fiction beyond which history becomes historical and "Time: The Past" becomes paster.

This is a historical novel. Even though some real people still living walk through its pages, it is not a period novel. Real or fictional, few of these characters had seen a movie or wrecked an automobile, which to me makes them seem as historical as J. Caesar or five-cent beer. They used the words "manly" and "womanly" to describe quintessences of sex of which one could be proud, and they picked, fought, and settled a war during a summer vacation, and I think this is historical and maybe even historic.

There is no bibliography, since a novelist is a kind of mountebank who hawks entertainment, not study courses. Footnotes and marginalia belong to the professional historian, who also has bread and honor to earn. If you want to know what's what, ask grandpa—he knows. Unless you are grandma, and know a sight better about things than he.

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PART I

Winter: Philadelphia

Philadelphians are every whit as mediocre as their neighbors, but they seldom encourage each other in mediocrity by giving it a more agreeable name.

—Agnes Repplier (1898)

He polished steam off his glasses.

"I'm not drunk," Caleb Hawkins said aloud, "and this is the new year of grace 1898, but sure as I'm born there's a mailed knight down there collecting garbage!"

He raised his grimy window, and a tawny gaslight leaked into his bedroom from the alley. Soot and snow-ice soiled his fingers.

"Damn!" Caleb said, and wiped his hand on the bedspread before removing his silk hat. Leaning out into the cold, he called, "Happy New Year, Sir Lancelot!"

The man in the alley looked up suspiciously. His eyes were bleared and tufts of red hair stuck out under his helmet.

"Same to you," the knight grunted. He lowered his heavy wooden tub, cupped his hands and blew into them.

"I see you found the Grail," Caleb said.

Lancelot looked sullenly about at the rows of alley windows, and shouted suddenly, "Pretty soft for youse! Slop-whoa!"

The customary collection cry went unanswered. Shutters and panes stared indifferently at one another across the brick backs of Marble Terrace.

"You sound as if you need a drink," Caleb said.

"I don't need one, but I could use one."

"The cellar door's probably open. My flat's on the left: Hawkins."

"Mister Hawkins," said Lancelot, "you're a sport."

"If Guinevere's holding your horse, bring her along."

When the knight clinked his tin plate into one of Caleb's chairs he gave the Philadelphia mummers' toast over a tumbler of rum.

"Pork and plenty, mister! Say, who's Guinevere?"

"Death to missionaries!" his host responded. "A-ah-h-h . . . What did you say?"

"Nobody has to hold Oscar; he hups when I hup, and stops on a ho. I asked, who's Guinevere?"

"Sir knight, I suspect you've been in too many jousts. Too much falling on your conk has made you forgetful. Guinevere's your lady-love, man! She's married to King Arthur, of course, but we villeins expect gaiety of the aristocracy."

"Like Prince Edward, huh? Well, tell me something, Mister Hawkins, how did you know I was this Lance-alot? That's what I was, but even when I told the guys down at the D.P.W. they still didn't catch the idea."

"Easy," Caleb said. "Character shines through incognito. Here's looking up your record!"

"How!" The Flower of All Knights drank, and shoved up a striped sweater which was drooping below his tuilles. "Gawd! Four months to wire this hardware together, and I din't even get my share of drinks out of it. New Year shooting's not what it use to be; people ain't as friendly no more. Gawd, the work me and Ellen put on this tin!"

"Hooray, and an Ellen, too, Lily Maid of Astolat! Lancelot plays the field."

The redhead worked it out for himself. "No, her name use to be Schwab, not Astolat. Dutch, you see, not Eye-talian. . . . Oh, I connect! You mean Lance-alot had an Ellen on the string too?"

"An Elaine. Same difference."

"Doggone! Ellen'll be tickled."

Caleb bent to feel his throbbing feet. They had not recovered from Bea's heavy treadings at Saturday's dance. Slipping off his patent-leathers, he wiggled his toes and moaned.

Lancelot clucked. "Sore puppies sure is hell."

"I feel as though some cop had given me a hotfoot, for a fact."

Bea Fairchild was as graceful as a cow, Caleb thought, and lisped besides. One of the drawbacks about knowing girls from your bib-and-pusher days, whose family names were good and old, was that you were expected to stay social with them even if some turned out leaden-footed like Bea or grew half as much beard as Dr. S. Weir Mitchell. In a community as old as Frankford, where the better people all were cousins, it was loose of a chap to make his own friends. Hadn't his ancestors already arranged the matter for him? Oh, joy! . . .

He gaped wearily, nodding to Lancelot to help himself to the demijohn. . . . That New Year's soiree had been a confounded bore. Everywhere in the Philadelphia-that-counted you saw the same people, heard the same jokes, did the same things; it was a social puss-in-the-corner. The eggnog at the New Year, the horse shows in June, Nova Scotia or Cape May in summer, the Assembly dance in the fall—all were required, even if one's Quaker heritage did not entirely approve of all the rounds.

To turn the dull knife, he'd had to hear his father and mother most of Sunday.

"It is a pity thee has an independent income, Caleb," the old man had said. "It has blinded thee to all sense of responsibility."

"Must thee continue reading the law, my son?" his mother pleaded. "Do reconsider thy decision."

"Never thee mind, Lydia," George Fox Hawkins had told his wife then. "Tomorrow he will race after something else. That is Caleb."

They never stormed, because that wasn't like Quakers, but if doves pecked you to death, wouldn't you be just as dead as though a lion had ripped you? Fortunately Uncle Caleb's estate had become young Caleb's inheritance on the year of his majority, and it freed him. He'd taken the apartment on Marble Terrace to be independent of home and, when he had been graduated at the University, had continued there. His law courses were symbols of his irritation with, and declaration of independence from, his family and their damned Wagon Works. It pleased him to shock them by an-

nouncing for the law, when they deplored lawmongering as a principle of faith. But now—now the law school was ho-hum too. . . .

Caleb glanced at his watch. Six-thirty. He stood up abruptly, but with trained liteness, and spoke almost courteously.

"Come on, sir knight. I've got to snatch sleep for classes today, and maybe you've left the Grail too long. You don't mind?"

"Nah. Thanks for the schnapps. Happy New Year."

Ten minutes later Caleb was asleep. A wan sun peeped out at meridian, but later in the day lights had to be turned on while the city worked. The lights shone in the classrooms of the University Law School, too, but Caleb slept on beside his unwound alarm clock. It was a bore also.

Susan finished her fried mush and watched her mother put the canary's bathtub into its cage. From the parlor a clock went *ding* and the bird said, "Beep?"

"Half-past six," Susan said, "and Gus hasn't come down yet. Maybe I'd better go see."

Mrs. Brecht snorted. "Him and his Golden Slipper shooters! When a New Year's comes on a week end, don't they make extra of it, don't they just?"

Susan smiled. Her lips were so naturally red that catty females at the Arsenal indicted her of the use of lipstick. Except for a very judicious dabble of powder, no woman dared use cosmetics but an actress—and anyone could tell what "actress" meant.

"Gus is a well-behaved soul, Ma. Any man has a right to kick over the traces once a year, I'd say."

"You've forgotten what happened after the soccer-cup play-off."

Susan licked a finger and nodded. "Yes, he hoisted a load aboard then, too, but only because they beat the Kensington Thistles when they had no right to."

"Well, let me tell you: alcohol's a pity—once, twice, or a hundred drunks a year. Lord, what it did to your father, poor soul. And Gus Kelley's not getting any younger, either." Mrs. Brecht cooed to the canary, "You wouldn't touch the rotten stuff, would you, Peteykins?"

The bird whetted his bill on a cuttlebone and said, "Certainly not," if that was one of the meanings of "beep."

"Of course not," Margaret Brecht said. "Susan, you bundle up good. It's a morning that cuts through a person."

Above them a door creaked, and they heard Gus start downstairs. Midway he paused to cough and, when he had gotten his breath again, said, "Ai, yi, yi." When he pushed through the glass-bead curtains from parlor to dining room the women noticed that he had forced his face into an expression of brisk amiability, which rather emphasized what it was meant to conceal.

"Happy New Year, Gus," Susan said.

"Your mush's cold," Mrs. Brecht said.

The man scratched his scrub of grizzled hair. "But no colder than the way you said that, I bet. Thanks, but I don't think I can wallop it down."

Ma Brecht put her nose up and paraded into the kitchen. Her boarder looked morose.

"Your ma's a woman of wonderful sniffs, Susie," he said.

"She'll get over it."

"Omeomy—well, I'm set whenever you are."

"I'm going to have another cup of cocoa, to keep you company. How do you expect to hold out all morning without eating a little something?"

Gus rubbed his belly and sighed. "Pigs' feet, pretzels, and beer—I had enough to last me a month. And me mouth tastes vulcanized too. It sure was some celebration. Had no casualties, neither—just the ornery social fist fights—except Ben Charles. He fell on his puss and rammed a tin horn down his gozzle. Did you see any of our doings?"

"Nosiree! You shooters can have my share of pneumonia. I stayed in where it was snug, and read and rested."

"My Gambrinus getup was a whooper, they tell me. Won an eggcup with it from the 23rd Ward Republican Club."

As they put on their coats in the narrow hallway Gus tipped over a sansevieria plant. Its jardiniere broke.

"Damnation! Now won't your ma have cat fits!"

"Never mind, Gus," Susan said. "It wanted breaking. I was sick of it. Leave it lay."

Her mother heard. If Ma had meant to sail into their boarder for being a blunderbuss, the look of her daughter quelled her. Instead she thrust an oiled paper bag at the man.

"Here, you bull on skates. I fixed a little something for you for later. Put it in your pocket. Go on, Susan; I'll get the dustpan."

"It's not that cussworthy flowerpot I'm ashamedest about, Susie," Gus said outside. "No, it was roaring in this morning whooping I could lick my weight in bartenders. Now your ma's acting like I was out with Nero or Oscar Wilde."

He peeped at her sidelong, but she walked as if she had not heard. Orthodox Street was slushy, and the wind stung like the snap of a wet towel. Fat man and slim girl cowered inside their overcoats as they faced the northeast and toward the Arsenal.

"I'm not what you'd call a drinking man, now am I? No, I'm not. Even if I was—and I'm not—what's wrong with drinking? Making alcohol is God's job, just like making rain. And, like the fella says, every thing to its place—water rusts pipes, scales up boilers, rots beams, but beer don't."

Susan gave him a twinkle, so Gus was encouraged. Self-justification is much more fun with a sympathetic audience.

"Be damn! Water is plain unsafe!" he rumbled. A passing lamp-lighter almost dropped his ladder and lamp stick. "Especially Philly's. It ain't fit even to launder me socks. Does whisky have bacilluses? Don't make me laugh!"

The girl did not try. Gus lowered his declamatory voice.

"Susie, that busted jardiniere put you in mind of hard times, didn't it? Well, they're past and gone, so lookit it this way. . . ."

She wooled her thoughts as he chattered. Gus was—what was the word she'd looked up yesterday while reading *Hugh Wynne*?—"ebullient," that was it. Even hang-overs didn't slow Gus; death might, but would have a fight on its hands. Now, with herself any Monday morning was depressing, or streaked with restlessness. This Monday was worse because it began another uncertain year. What would 1898 bring for—for—oh, everybody? The thought made her

feel sad-sweet, as the rustling of leaves did when she'd been out gathering nuts in the fall. . . .

"I know you lived on potatoes, bread, and water when you painted jardinieres, and your ma was sick, but——"

"Just bread and water, Gus. The potatoes gave out before that."

He could talk without replies generally. She was able to hide within herself while still having the shield of his company. Shyness was bad enough when a person wasn't sure of herself, but loneliness was terrible.

When she and Ma had fled from Gramma's farm into the city, the terror of aloneness had been something Susan felt like a nausea. She had been thirteen and what Gramma had called "shamefully well developed." Gramma's charitable food and shelter was tyranny, unrelieved by anything after the death of Susan's father, a rather dear man who failed to accomplish much during his life except to keep distilleries running all night. Lacking him to despise, Gramma worked on his daughter until the day the brat struck her and left. . . . The ingrate! The rebel! If Gramma's own minister punished his children by running ice water down their naked backs, that should be good enough for her granddaughter! . . .

Margaret Brecht had saved twenty dollars in a teapot, on which they had depended for their start in town. But when Ma came down with an anemic prostration, and had to drink vermouth and hot cow's blood on doctor's prescription, the twenty dollars went and Susan despaired. She had thought she might work in a library for their keep, and to extend an education which ended after grammar school, but no library seemed to be hiring shabby girls of thirteen. Sweatshops were, however, so Susan got a job crimping paper flowers in a basement where unseen water always dripped, where the women stripped to their waists during the summer and stunk and cursed the year around, and wherefrom eventually Susan was fired.

"Too slow, too slow you are! Six gross only a day. I pay you seventy-two cents—now get out!"

Then began Susan's long walks in broken cloth-topped shoes, to save the important nickel of the trolley fare, to a succession of jobs.

Knotting and burling tapestry, wrapping popcorn, selling crockery at two-and-a-half a week, painting jardinières. She never forgot taking thin air in a park for lunch, nor the numbness of fourteen hours' work a day, nor the landlady who sold her spare clothes, nor the pitying neighbors who had taken Susan and her mother in to share their own poverty. Nor the lice she picked up, the colds, the headaches, and the worry about a sick mother doing wash for a dollar a week.

And always there was a hairy hand to roam a shamefully well-developed girl, and always there were hints how smart young ladies boosted their earnings on the side by a nice easy half dollar here and there. . . .

"Take like the Arsenal," Gus was saying. "Women've worked there from 'way back past the War of the Rebellion, and . . ."

"Yes, Gus. . . ."

People made jokes about "the poor working girl, may Heaven protect her," but it was true, ugly true! Ten-twent'-thirt' pa-thetics did not amuse Susan when some young man splurged and took her to a music hall. She wept when they did not enrage her.

Now, however, the Arsenal was much, much better. The army officers and foremen were decent, the work was clean, and her job paid a solid dollar and two cents for a day of only nine hours. With budgeting, and the help of the two-bit hot lunches Ma was serving at home to Arsenal workers, Susan hoped to Get Somewhere. Why, for just two dollars a month, an ad said, you could get a college education by mail from Scranton. . . .

"I wonder," Susan said dreamily, "if I dare-st buy a set of Chambers' Encyclopedia on tick?"

"Dodgast it, Susie, you never heard a word I said!"

"Oh, forgive me, Gus—I was off a thousand miles."

"Well, how about it?"

"How about what?"

"The rally tonight. The speaker's good—he's a big potato in our Henry George Club, and educated to beat the band."

Susan tried not to offend her companion by showing doubt. It

was all wellangood for a man to be a Socialist if he couldn't help it, but to be seen in their company—was that ladylike? . . .

"Well, I'd sort of promised Ma I'd——"

"Suit yourself," Gus said stiffly. "Sometimes I think this whole hurrah for woman suffrage is a waste of ginger. Durn if you pussies don't act like you could take it or leave it lay!"

. . . On the other hand, the command of language of a good speaker might be instructive, irregardless of his ideas. . . .

"All right, Gus, I'll go. But I can't stay late."

"We'll skiddoo any time you want to."

After all, Susan argued, one of the big advantages of being a Philadelphian was the educational tradition of the city. There were juntos, societies, and mutual-improvement groups for anyone interested in advancing herself beyond the mere genteel mangling of words like "Cheusday." But was a Socialist rally for woman suffrage Cultural? Dearodear, it was so hard to say!

His stomach peremptorily said that warmed-over coffee was not going to do, so Warren pushed aside the latest short story he had started. The action of the blamed yarn wouldn't jell anyhow, he muttered as he began to dress. If only Warren Meredith Spangler could shackle a tricky idea on his characters the way Frank Stockton could! Or Richard Harding Davis—there was a man for you. No wonder the Big Boss was proud of him; R.H.D. was not only his son and a hot New York reporter, but a crackerjack author besides.

Warren's landlady rapped his door. "Half-past six, Mr. Spangler."

"I'm alive, Mrs. Workman, thanks."

He tried to write two mornings a week before hustling out to the *Public Ledger*, or to one of the district police stations which had been his beats. Warren Spangler had a working reporter's private vision of literary glory, but he never mentioned those two mornings a week to anybody. The boys in the station house or city room might begin asking whether he used grammar for a change at such times, or didn't he find that a quill pen invited smooth thought. The hell with that!

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As he peeled off the heavy bathrobe his mother had made Warren caught a glimpse of himself in the cracked wall mirror and said, "Howdy, you dashing thing, you."

His father once had said, "I'm glad you take after your mother for looks, Stretch. She was always a handsome critter, and it's pleasant for anyone to have their ears pasted on straight and to have steady eyes. Maybe you ought to have got her mouth, too, but the Lord gave you my trap and that habit of pushing it out when you're puzzled. Anyhoo, I'm glad you got my build—helped you make the crew, didn't it?"

Warren thought of his father and smiled. Dad was the kind who took many things seriously, but seldom himself. And Mother was right for him, and for their kids. . . . Wasn't it lucky to be able to like your parents besides loving them?

They didn't know his big news yet. Family correspondence went to pot when you wrote for a living.

He tucked in his shirttails and picked up his pen again.

Dear Folks [he scratched, while the gas log hissed in the quiet room], Did you get my New Year's greeting on time? I almost forgot, because I was excited. Friday the city editor called me in to say I'm being relieved of cop chasing, and for a while I'm to get general assignments with—hold tight!—a by-line on the good ones! I'll send you the first clipping, you can bet.

I'm tickled, and hope you are. After four years, this is my chance. There's nothing wrong with police reporting, and some men prefer it, but it got me down at times. Too many suicides and dead infants in West Philly ash cans—all the wretchedness of a city which the police have to "police," in short. If I live to be a grandpa I'll still wake up nights to hear orders to "Hop up to Swampoodle—mob of micks clubbing themselves silly over near Mount Peace," or, "Have a look at 1823 Vine—man on roof." It was useful experience, but not the High Life.

Now I'm onward and upward, maybe to reach the heights of writing about corruption in City Hall. Maybe I'll interview J. P. Morgan and other foreign dignitaries when they come to town, but I'd settle for Miss Ada Rehan (yow!). And I'm being raised to twentyfive bones a week, coin of the realm! I am viewing my pros-

perity with reasonable calm, because I owe a couple of rocks here and there which may take some paying back.

Joking aside, I am proud. You never thought I'd make a newspaperman, and almost convinced me. Too "schusslich," we agreed, and he stutters when he's excited or embarrassed—a dandy qualification! But so far I've made the grade; a touch of genius would have helped, but my legs were long enough for the legwork. I had to keep whispering encouragement to myself when the cracks in my bedroom ceiling spelled f-a-i-l-u-r-e. Last month I sat out in Independence Square feeling so blue I couldn't trust my voice; I'd worked a week running down a story which the Desk cut to ten measly sticks of type. I wondered whether I hadn't better ask for a job carrying a hod on the Independence Hall project I was watching—my body seemed to be muscle all the way, including the gap between the ears.

Well, that's thirty for "I, the first letter of the alphabet." How be all you? How's your rheumatiz, Dad? I wonder if those reconcentration camps down in Cuba are as bad as that Confederate bull pen you were in?

Mother, the wrapper you gave me for Christmas is as warm as your love. I used it this morning when I got up early to write some of the junk I'm doing on my own hook. I destroy it all. When a man sets any writing out into print, he has invited criticism from all comers—it's like holding a vivisection on oneself in Snellenburg's Market Street window. I haven't felt equal to inviting that by submitting my stories. They're hogwash.

Give Beth and Our Frieda kisses for me. How is F's youngest? My landlady says scraped apple kept her children "regular" when they were babies. I wouldn't know about my dear niece, but the police horses I cajole with apples love them.

Jim hasn't written in a long while. I wish he would scoot down here for a show and a visit—it isn't as if Reading were on the other side of the Pole, and grieving for his wife won't—Excuse me, I don't know what I'm talking about. Moralizing over grief is cheap, and being his brother gives me no better right.

Still love having his kids around the house, Mother? They certainly do "help fill up the place," as you said, but don't you get jumpy? I love the Lord, but I sure got tired of His birthday when they tried out all those bugles and drums. Kiss the hoodlums for me, anyway.

Now I must beat it. I can't afford to be late on the first day of my new dignity. They told me Friday I might go cover a suffrage meeting in Frankford tonight. That was a dull thud when the least I'd expected was to be set to investigating the city's garbage contract, which has the characteristic odor you'd expect. But, who knows—something might happen.

ii

The Socialist speaker on the rostrum struck a pose which reminded Warren of Dr. Munyon on the patent-medicine posters saying, "There is hope." The reporter squirmed unhappily on his hard chautauqua chair and again studied the faces about him.

Here tonight were some of the loomtenders, ropewalkers, shipworkers, and toolmakers who were building Philadelphia into the first industrial city of the nation, but they looked tired rather than proud. Sober and worn they were, and Warren wondered how in thunder a hastily washed man who had been splitting hides all day, say, or a woman who carried a child at teat, could have gumption enough left to sit through this John-the-Baptist harangue. More workmen stayed away than came, of course, but Warren admired the stamina and sincerity of those who did come. In the babel of voices before the rally began he had heard half the accents of Europe as well as the flat catarrhals of Philadelphia. It reminded him of Jacob Riis, who was saying all America today was a melting pot, but Warren noted a line on his pad that the simmer had begun long ago in Philadelphia, free crucible that the Quakers had made it.

Odd hairpins, the Quakers. They were so doggoned literal about the meaning of words like "freedom." They'd squeeze a dollar until Liberty's crown bent, but they disdained to swear that such-and-such or so-and-so was the truth. Truth was no Sunday necktie to be saved for formal occasions—no wonder the Lenape and Susquehannocks had wept when the first leader of the straight talkers died across the waters.

Later, of course, dross scummed up the crucible, and the "greene countrie towne" became more like the Babylon after which its founder had planned its squares, but still there were . . .

"Excuse me, but your foot's on the pencil I dropped."

"I beg pardon."

Warren handed the girl in a tam-o'-shanter her pencil. Through his maundering a torrent of the orator's words flooded into his ears.

"And I say most solemnly, comrades," the gaunt speaker said, measuring out dependent clauses as a sempstress would cloth, "that so long as women are forbidden the polls, the gore which ran red on Breed's Hill, which stained the ice of Valley Forge, which slicked the decks of the *Constitution*—yes, and that which some of you here tonight shed to cleanse our federal brotherhood of the crime of black bondage—so long as this denial persists, I say, these sacrifices of patriots have been a noble waste. Our sisters must not be refused what God gave free men! Is theirs any less a slavery because——"

"What's God got to do with the washing and cooking?" a voice yelled.

"Women in the home, Socialists in jail!" someone else called from the back.

Warren craned to see who was shouting. There had been other interruptions during the meeting, but the men on the platform had ignored them.

"Slavery still exists among us," the speaker went on, "an obscene foulness in a land devoted to a principle sacred to Christianity and democratic law: the equality of mankind before their Creator and their own judges. It is——"

"Your blabbermouth dirties God's name!"

Something flew over Warren's head toward the platform, and a leaf of cabbage fell into his lap. The speaker dodged, gripped the edges of the lectern, and tried to continue. A hubbub rose, and the young woman next to Warren contributed a "gosh darn!" to it. A few burly members of the audience started back for the vegetable grenadier, including a grizzled fellow on the girl's left.

"Gus, come back! You'll get hurt! Gus!"

Other women were trumpeting alarms too, for a fight had started at the doors. The hecklers were armed after a fashion: one laid about with what Warren at first thought was a heavy brush, and others swung short sticks. They seemed to have broken in, most of them, from the outer hall; as far as Warren could see, the invasion looked planned. Many of the invaders plainly were citizens bent on halting un-American nonsense, but a few looked as savage as their knuckle-dusters. Toughs, Warren muttered. . . . Funny how alliances against reform so often brought under the same banner the merchant and the crook together. And the city authorities wouldn't prosecute too vigorously this time, either, for roughing up a meeting of radicals hardly came under a breach of the peace. . . .

The hoodlum with the brush flung it overhand toward the rostrum.

"Well, I'll be damned!" Warren said aloud. "It's no mop; it's a dead cat!"

He felt a tug at his trouser leg and looked down from his chair.

"I'm scared," said the girl in the tam-o'-shanter. "Those goldarn bullies!"

Warren smiled. She did not look too frightened, for her black eyes had depth and heat. He liked her looks: a clear skin, full red mouth, and, although she was not big, her gray cheviot jacket was tailored well by the body within it. She sat up straight as a baton, too.

"Don't be scared," he said. "Our team probably will throw those lunks— Pee-ou! Speaking of throwing, somebody fired a stink bomb! C-come on, let's scat."

He took her hand and pulled her to the side aisle. On the platform, he noticed, the speaker was herding a group of committee-women toward the wings.

"Up front!" Warren whispered. "There's p-probably a st-stairs behind the stage."

The girl tugged at his hand. "Yes, but we ought to help Gus! I mustn't leave without Gus!"

"He oughtn't have left you," Warren said, bundling her along.

The crowd in the aisle wanted to push the other way, however.

Warren had an inspiration; leaning down to the ear of a one-eyed workman who was arming himself with a spittoon, he breathed an anxiety.

"Is that so?" said the man. "Hey, Ferd! Let's give this couple a hand."

With convoy, Warren and his puzzled responsibility reached the door to the stage quickly. The one-eyed man called through it:

"Open up inside! This is Bob Sample. We got a woman out here who's going to have a baby!"

Warren felt a poke in his ribs. "Did you tell them that?"

"Sssh!"

"Don't *shush* me! Did you?"

"You will have babies—s-someday, won't you?"

"Here you are," the thin orator said, beckoning hurriedly through a partly opened door. "Quick! Madam, if you and your husband want to try it, there's a fire escape second door down on your right. Or stay with us. But for God's sake next time remember your condition!"

"But I don't——"

"Thanks, mister. Thank you, boys," Warren said loudly. "Come, dear."

Some distance down the dim corridor he relaxed his grip, and she twisted from his grasp. Quite smartly, also, she kicked him in the shins.

"Ow!"

"Let that be a lesson to you, Mister Fixit!" she said, and walked to the fire-escape window to tug at the sash.

"You're pretty rough," he said. "Here—w-windows w-will open better when they're unlocked. Al-l-low me."

"My goodness, but you're almighty fresh!"

"Scold me by name. It's W-Warren Spangler. What's yours?"

"Smarty!"

"That's a pretty name," he said.

The window opened with a cracking of wood. A frigid breeze cut through the smell of coal gas and perspiration in the hall, danced

with the fishtail flame in the red bowl over the escape window, and brought the clang of a bell.

"There comes the Maria and the riot squad," Warren said, clambering out onto the rusty platform. "This way we save time and foolish questions. Give me your hand—the steps are icy."

She drew back. "I can't leave without Gus."

"Hell. Pleased to have met you. . . ."

"Wait! Wait for me!"

"Take it easy. The steps are slippery."

"You turn your head—I'm coming over the sill myself! Now. . . . O-o-p!"

He caught her by blocking the steps, and she kicked him in the shin again, this time without malice.

"We'll never make it standing up," she wailed.

"I'll never make it anywhere if you succeed in crippling me."

"Oh, I'm sorry. I should thank you, I guess, Mr.—Mr.——"

"Spangler. And I'm sorry I told them we were married. N-no, I m-mean——"

"Fudge! My name is Susan Brecht, Mr. Spangler."

"Howdydo. . . . Now what are you up to?"

"You turn your head! Don't look back!"

When he slipped again, saving himself by a snatch at the rail which set his vertebrae clacking, Warren also decided to be humble and imitate the girl. He sat down and began to descend, bump by bump.

Before they reached the alley they were giggling. The laughter started furtively, was choked back by Susan and mixed with coarse mutters on Warren's part, but it grew unashamed. Long afterward Warren said, "Philosophers may know why the human backside and its functions are subjects for low comedy, but I began to know a woman while we were inching down a frozen fire escape on our behinds and laughing like hyenas!"

The alley smelled of laundry suds, garbage, and cats, and once the couple stood firm on its cobbles their fits ended in a sort of companionable embarrassment. But if their seats were chilly, another kind of ice had been broken, for when Susan said, "Ou-u-u!" and wriggled, they burst out again.

She found her handkerchief and blew her nose daintily. "Deardear, it really isn't funny, but very undignified."

"Never mind figuring it out now. I'll see you home before we both catch class-A colds."

"I live near by. My mother can brew some tea while we dry out."

A pot-helmeted policeman stood at the alley's end, but Warren knew him. They exchanged surprised greetings over seeing each other in this section of the "goats," and the patrolman saluted Susan when she passed him. She suddenly realized she never had been saluted by a cop in her life, and said so.

Warren chuckled. "Officer Schwartz always likes to have his name in my paper. He was on the Tenth and Buttonwood force when I knew him."

"Oh, are you a newspaper writer?"

The way she said it made it sound like, "Are you Sir Thomas Lipton?" and Warren was flattered. . . . Oh, to be sure, a lot of reporters still were booze fighters and illiterates—they were brothers to the dumb cop who had to drag a bum to York Street to arrest him, because the flatfoot could not spell Susquehanna Avenue. But men like Richard Harding Davis were forcing the world to change its opinion. . . .

Ma Brecht clucked when she heard of their experiences and made tea while they changed their clothes. At her insistence Warren found a pair of big-bellied trousers in Gus's room, and when he reappeared downstairs, holding them up with both hands, the women tittered.

"He looks like Lew Fields in Joe Weber's pants, doesn't he, Ma?" Susan said, and quickly blushed for having said p-a-n-t-s.

Margaret noticed a skinned shin above one high-water cuff and said, "My! Whatever did you do to yourself, Mr. Spangler?"

"Why, your daugh— Oh, nothing much. I scraped it. I've got the kind of long legs that tempt accidents."

Margaret went off for the witch hazel, murmuring about what a fine to-do this was, tsk-tsk. Her daughter said, "Thank you, Mr. Spangler. You are gallant."

He laughed. Susan realized then that he was quite good-looking,

and was surprised she had not seen that before; but, of course, there'd been a lot of hurrah and distractions.

"Will you call me Warren?"

"Certainly not. I don't know you well enough."

"But 'm-mister' is for directors of the Girard Trust. It's a plug-hat word."

"A girl can't call a gentleman by his given name the first time they meet."

"I'm not a gentleman, so why not?"

"Because."

"*Quod erat demonstrandum*. Bingo."

The street door slammed and a wild man pelted into the room. Warren rose defensively before he recognized the gray-haired man he had seen with Susan an hour before.

"Where did you get to, Susie? Who's this?"

August Kelley had gone to the rally as sedately as his *platt-deutsch* mother might have, but returned looking like his father once looked after a hurling match with County Tyrone. The seat of his pants was out, his right eye was closing, and a knuckle must have hurt, for he massaged it tenderly. Margaret Brecht, coming back with the court plaster and liniment for Warren, took one look and gasped.

"Susan, help the cripples. I'll put on more tea and get some hamburger. We'll see if it helps a dotted eye—what do we care how much it costs?"

"The look I got," Gus said when the older woman had bustled out, "reminds me of when I first tasted asafetida."

Susan murmured some hypocrisy about being unable to stomach the task of patching up Warren's leg—what, touch a man's limb, when you must not use his first name promiscuously?—so he talked with Gus while he dabbed witch hazel. Susan backed against the fire to watch him, thinking what a shame it was to meet a young man so romantically and then probably never see him again. The young man himself was baiting Gus about the theme of the evening.

"Man I interviewed the other day said that giving women votes

to help run the country would be as dumb as rigging a ship with silk. Their moral influence would get contaminated by civic duties, and——”

Gus exploded. “Moral infloonce, my elbow! Women are human beans like men, no more and no less! This pooppy talk that goes on about women gives me the pip. That stuffed shirt you talked to is loony. Women ain’t full of grace just because they’re female; the Lord made more bedbugs of both sexes than ever He did larks!”

“You mind your tongue,” Susan said.

“See? They don’t care so much what you say as how you say it. That’s moral infloonce for you—if something’s right but not pretty, it’s wrong!”

Gus would have continued his palaver, but the young people had turned their attention away. Not much more remained for an aging man to do except to say good night, so he said it. . . . The hour was getting on, he was tired, and—ach du lieber, with the look Susie was giving this young feller you could take the damp off an armory. . . .

A half hour later Warren took the Fifth Street trolley southward, feeling the night had been agreeable. The story of the riot was nothing, and when he got to the *Ledger* office his account of it ran only two paragraphs. The city editor would spot it somewhere between “Mangled Body Found On B. & O. Tracks” and “D.P.W. Buys Five New Rotary Brooms,” if he used it at all. Warren yawned, turned in his copy, and trudged home—home! my God!—to Mrs. Workman’s boardinghouse. In the stillness of his fusty room he began to write another report of the evening.

“Dear Folks,” it went, “Tonight I met a girl who kicked me in the shins. . . .”

iii

“Brickadelphia,” people called it in 1898. Penn’s “greene countrie towne” never had known a holocaust, back from the early days when it was the largest Empire city outside London. Ancient brick lasts a

long time, and in later days tubercular homunculi still were to inhabit tenements of colonial years and share courtyard pumps and privies with rats which are as indifferent to the heroic past as the renters are.

Yet it was not the tenement which meant Brickadelphia to Susan Brecht; it was rather the one-family shoe box, row on row along the streets. Infinities of identical sandstone and marble steps, foot scrapers, and white china doorknobs. Ma Brecht knelt every Saturday to scrub her steps and polish her doorknob, swapping amicable slander with neighbors similarly occupied. Some of the shoe boxes were crowned with false tin cornices, some had "busy-bodies"—three-way mirrors to look down into the street unseen—others had flagpoles. Such features were reference points, but Gus Kelley once gave a woman two houses down from the Brechts' quite a flutter by mistaking her place for his own—his landlady had that day rearranged her window plants without advance warning.

The gas lamps Warren knew, spiked like uhlan helmets, throw lemon light even today among the ranked shoe boxes. Hucksters up from Jersey still hawk through the skinny back alleys, as do scissors grinders and umbrella menders. The Negro women who sold pepper pot from tubs they balanced on their heads have gone, but trash still is collected in horse-drawn dumpcarts patented by a Quaker, Tom Castor, back in 1852.

"That peppy pot must be as full of these here newfangled bacilluses as Bowser is of fleas," Margaret used to say, "but those poor black souls got to earn a living."

Mrs. Brecht's implied apathy toward the cause of public health—or the public anything—was shared by a million and a quarter more Brotherly Lovers. With implacable tolerance they even refused to be troubled by corrupt government, or the ghastly "French Renaissance" City Hall which housed one branch of it. Clarke Davis of the *Ledger* might write editorials urging all to awake to their peril, but who reads editorials when he can turn to "eight pages of excruciatingly funny colored comics"?

It was a neighborhood city, Gus told Warren. "Maybe a few

squares away our Philly continues, but we don't really think so. Once you could pick a pocket in Louse Harbor, which was above Lehigh and west of Second, and escape the coppers by dusting 'way out west to Goosetown. 'Way out west—to Twentieth and Cambria! Philly's just the sum of villages like Manayunk, Spring Garden, and the Northern Liberties, and such buzzard's glories. We don't give a nickel for what other burgs call Progress, and we're proud Ben Franklin was born here and made the best mayor a town ever had—which are about the only two things Ben *didn't* manage to accomplish. We got the Liberty Bell to look at and ice cream to eat—hell, man, we even got bustle, if only in Bustleton up on the Pennypack!”

By the time in late January when the battleship *Maine* was sent to display its friendly ten-inch batteries to the city of Havana, Warren and Susan had become, as Ma put it, “pretty thick.” Together they went to see “refined, high-class vaudeville,” and watched the Hancock A. A. beat Wilmington in a “fiercely contested” basketball game, 17-4. Sousa's band came and went while Warren was broke, but they did hear an inexpensive lecture on Napoleon by the “young French scholar,” Hilaire Belloc. Susan asked her escort to criticize the notes she made on it, and crowed when she proved he couldn't spell “fiery.”

Warren was amused by the young lady's thirst for culture, so he brought her books from Leary's which they often hotly discussed.

“Hall Caine? Marie Corelli?” Warren snorted. “Pap ladlers!”

“They write elevating books,” Susan said. “Not like your Maggie—you and your ‘stark realism!’”

Warren sighed. “If only I could write like Stephen Crane. He writes what he sees—not what languid females want for hammock reading.”

“Now you look here!” Susan snapped. “I know how brutal the world can be, but do I have to read about it too? I should smile! Give me something uplifting any day, a book about refined people doing nice things. The world's full enough of nastiness, thank you!”

Warren did not know then that the best defense against a woman was a good sharp "Yes'm." He was young; he argued.

"That very condition of nastiness makes it your responsibility to read and to think about it, Susie."

"Go 'way back and sit down, Mister Know-it-all! Vileness is vile-ness. 'Responsibility,' pooh!"

"Doggone, am I vile because I like realism, and the ladies' magazines good because they reject it?"

"Let's not be personal," she said. "But—no, you're not vile. Just sappy."

"Huh. Well, there are yet a few like me in Israel. Our judgments won't be measured in terms of Robert Hichens and Louisa Alcott. How in the name of Moses can a writer of even fair eyesight and moderate honesty substitute prettiness for ugliness when it's wrong?"

"You'll change your mind when you're a father. You'll want to protect the kiddies."

"Look, Susie—I've got nothing against children reading the F-Froggy F-Fairy Books, but I'll be d-damned if I want to be restricted to sweetness and light just to keep the little s-savages pure! Only sick adults eat Mellin's Food!"

Susan rebuked him serenely. "My kiddies will get their mouths washed out with soap for saying d-a-m-n, too."

However, she was stirred more than she cared to admit by his sincerity. The very fact that she believed he was sincere might have indicated to her that she was troubled by the patness of her replies. But Susan did not re-examine her cant; believing that she believed the hypocrisies of her time gave her a feeling of belonging. . . . For goodnessake! Why wear a corset if it doesn't have whale-bone? . . .

Warren called on her, for his part, not as a Svengali, but because she was warm and lively and pleasant to look at. He never mentioned love to her, because he did not know that the reasons which impelled him to keep coming were sufficient. If he had known he was in love he would have spoken, for Warren was forthright.

Susan was confused about her own feelings, toward him as toward nearly everything; Warren just did not tingle as yet.

When she was too tired or he was too broke to go out of an evening, Warren would bring a pie from Acker's or fried oysters from the Reading Terminal, which they ate while the fire popped in the grate. Friends of Susan's often broke in, since what she called "Their Crowd" never permitted a girl privacy with a beau if her jolly companions knew he was calling. Warren thought the formula idiotic, but Susan organized the intrusions into taffy pulls, charades, or what-the-Harry.

On other occasions Warren's duties kept him away. She did not see him for three days before he called to take her to the University's Ivy Ball, because he had conceived, hunted down, and written his first special article. He was elated when he waved the paper at her that night.

"Here it is! I knew it had news value—even Old Picklepuss liked it! He's going to punch for editorial follow-up, too."

It was about birds on hats, Susan saw. He had spent two days in Rittenhouse Square observing and counting; the idea surprised her, for Susan never had thought of hat trimming in terms of living birds any more than of a pot roast as having been some calf's mother.

"How did you learn enough about birds to do this?" she asked.

"Walks with my dad when I was a kid, mostly. . . . Talk about immorality—the beggars who make women's hats don't only use egret and ostrich, but, so help me, I saw quail, wrens, and robins! Hundreds of them! My God, wr-wrens and r-robins!"

She looked at him with affectionate condescension. He raved so at the darnedest things, but she made him feel she was proud.

"Golly, what women won't do to primp, and what men won't do to chisel a dollar out of it. Oh well . . . That's a pretty dress you have on. You make it?"

"Yes, and Ma." She pirouetted, and the purple tulle whispered lightly. "I'm glad you like it. Only——"

"What?"

"Never mind. . . . I've never traveled with the smart set before, Warren. I can hardly believe I'm going to the Ivy Ball!"

The silk goods had cost more than a week's pay, and lacked proper decoration even so. Ma's jet beads were out of style, and Susan refused to dip into the teapot bank to buy lace or a frilly fan. But, praise the Lord, at least no one would know that underneath she had to wear a muslin chemise. Not even a decent handmade, but a nasty ready-to-wear that Wanamaker's said couldn't be told from the real thing. But we know, don't we, Susan? And your perfume is just that old Ed. Pinaud's violet cologne. Darn it all! . . .

"Are we ready?" she asked.

He swept his hat toward the door. "The pumpkin coach awaits, milady. I hired a hack."

"You didn't!"

"We can't ride the trolley in these getups. Jack Fineberg's soup-and-fish deserves the best," Warren said, caressing his rented suit. "Anyhow, the skate pulling the carriage looks as though he might change back to a rat at the witching hour. Let's go!"

Horticultural Hall turned Susan's knees to water.

"Oh, Warren, the flowers! The people! They're gorgeous!"

Her lashes shone with tears for the loveliness of the humming assembly under the great glass dome. Warren wondered if he dared write the story as if seen through the entranced eyes of a Susan, but the thought faded when it was drenched with a vision of the city editor's blue pencil and sarcasms. After all, this was only a college prom held in an old Centennial building, and the graces and dress of the young dancers were as hothouse-forced as the azaleas. It was one of the last places east of Pittsburgh he'd have picked to spend an evening, but the *Ledger* covered University doings, and Warren M. Spangler, Wharton '93—Damn! there went a shirt stud! . . .

"Greetings," a voice said. "How rocks the world with brother Spangler? You poor dear," it went on to Susan, "he must have chloroformed you to get your consent to come with him."

Warren said, "Susan, this is Caleb Hawkins, and he never was good for a thing except to throw furniture out windows during row-bottoms at Penn. The lady, Caleb, is Susan Brecht."

"Stretch is unkind, Miss Brecht. He still treats me like his lower-classman Little Brother. He dances badly, too—may I give you an opportunity to compare?"

Susan rather liked Mr. Hawkins. He was—oh—well-bred-fresh.

"I've got to count the house," Warren said, and gestured to go ahead, dance with the man if she wanted.

Caleb was a funny name, Susan thought, smiling brightly as he waltzed her out onto the floor. But he wasn't funny-looking; not with those close-lying brown curls and a profile like a Roman bust. It was a pity he wore spectacles and wasn't taller, but then maybe Warren was too eagle-eyed and too darn big. He waltzed beautifully, better than she, and certainly better than Warren. If Susan disliked any one thing about Caleb, it was the saying he was better; bragging jokes were not comical. Still, he was a very agreeable gentleman. He reminded her of a lieutenant at the Arsenal last year who had broken the hearts of Ella Tinker, Kate Schermerhorn, and Billie Williams before going on to marry a rich widow with heart trouble already.

By the end of "Birth of a Rose," three-quarter time, they had exchanged the scraps of personalities strangers do when they dance. Susan learned that Caleb was in second-year law at the University, that Josie De Mott—the famous equestrienne—had taught him to ride when he was four, that he had tried to run away with the Lewando Circus at eleven, that he boxed enthusiastically, and that his parents disliked all of it.

In return, Caleb found that she was not pledged to Stretch, ohdearno.

The advantage of the exchange was with Caleb, for with neither malice nor scruple he collected young women as some young women collected stationery monograms. During his university years his rooms at Marble Terrace had become laboratory and specimen cabinet, where he experimented with the science of the midnight chafing dish and the elaboration of the postulate that the human female is weak and willing. When he tired he dismissed his partners without causing them to hate him more than he desired they should.

"Stretch really is a fine fellow," he said, leading his dance partner to a wicker chair under some potted palms. "He worried about me at Penn, because the laws and prophets of Epsilon declared a senior brother should. I was his freshman protégé."

"I'm sure Warren would," Susan said.

He was estimating her, she thought. For what, she pretended not to know, but she was intrigued by the surge of her own female animalness. The new tulle dress, the poinsettias, the music, and the attentions of two college graduates undid her moral corsets, and she felt almost daring enough to say a good word for the poetry of Algernon Charles Swinburne.

"Shall we?" he asked when the music began again.

"I wouldn't feel right about Warren."

"Aroint, Spangler!" he said, snapping his fingers. "It would serve him right if you disappeared."

She laughed shakily. "But you must have your own—er—lady?"

"I came alone after the opera, just to look in. I did not intend to stay."

How significant he made "intend" sound! "Oh," she said.

"Let me get you some punch," he said. "It's bound to be harmless, unfortunately."

When he left she thought of Warren's jollity about a pumpkin coach. . . . Well, it was long past midnight now, and she still danced in the palace. Her slippers stayed glass, and two princes waited on her, if you could count Warren, wherever he was. . . . Her thought amused her into forgetting she wore muslin unmentionables.

Warren came back with Caleb. He looked disturbed, and Susan started guiltily, believing for an instant he had read her mind.

"Hello," he said. "I'm sorry I was kept so long."

He did not smile, so she said, "Is anything wrong?"

"Nothing to concern you." He struck a fist into his palm. "My brother is in some kind of trouble. They ran a messenger up from the office with a telegram from my father."

Caleb held the watery punch patiently. "I wish I could help," he said.

Despite her concern for Warren, Susan could not help thinking that beside the poised Mr. Hawkins he looked like a brewery truck horse. His shirt front bulged, his tie had slipped off center, and a lank lick of black hair hung over one eye. He cracked his knuckles and said, "Hmmm." Caleb, inches shorter and pounds lighter, somehow looked dominant as a poplar at sky line.

The big man hitched his shoulders and shot his cuffs. "Jim has disappeared, Dad says. One of the clerks in Jim's hotel said he hadn't been around for three days. Dad's twice as upset as he might be, because he's stiffened up with some recurrent rheumatism, so he's asked me to go to Reading to see what's doing."

"Oh dear," Susan said. "Is Jim the one who lost his wife?"

Warren nodded. "And he's my only brother," he said, as if that explained all. "Susie, I hate to ask it, but may I take you home now? I'll have to catch a train, and——"

"May I make a suggestion?" Caleb said. "I'm disengaged—really—and I'll be happy to assume responsibility for Miss Brecht. You can go directly to the station from here."

"Gee," Warren said. He looked at Susan.

She squeezed up her face urgently and nodded. She thought how curious it was that a mischance was her opportunity, and faintly despised herself too. . . .

"That relieves me," Warren said. "Susan knows where the carriage is. When you can, please send it back to the livery at Twelfth and Sansom, Caleb. I don't know how to thank you."

"No, no. The good fortune seems to be all mine."

Elsewhere that night, mischance happened which also was to affect them. The night was warm in Havana, and the bay quiet. On shipboard Captain Sigsbee "remembered hearing distinctly the echoes of the bugle at tattoo, which were very pleasant." He was writing to his wife in the port cabin and the chronometer showed nine-forty—when the table leaped under his hands . . . A blood-smeared marine dutifully reported an explosion as the captain struggled for'ard over debris and the dying.

In the time it takes to boil an egg, five out of seven of the coal

passers and topside men of Sigsbee's crew had found shallow bottom with their ship. At home the disaster was reported by the first banner headlines a stunned public ever had seen, the price of national flags boomed, and "Remember the Maine!" became fighting words.

iv

The Philadelphia Council declared that the city's flags should be half-masted out of respect to the *Maine* dead and passed then to other business. All vehicles which moved faster than a walk were ordered to carry lights hereafter. There was discussion of the growing perils of urban life: more card games seemed to end in throat-cutting, more trains hit milk wagons—persons with umbrellas even got electrocuted by low arc lights.

However, the risks assumed by young ladies who took up with merry law students were no concern of Council. . . . Within hours after Caleb had escorted Susan home from the ball he sent a note to Frankford:

Mrs. Fiske is playing Tess of the D'Urbervilles at the Park, and we are planning a party to see her Friday next. Will you honor our company? Give the messenger a favorable answer, please. The bunch will meet at Hoffman's for something light before the show, and we'll take dinner somewhere afterward.

Margaret Brecht commented, "'Bunch,' he says. Well, there's safety in numbers. Just don't stay out too late—you can't work without sleep," and so forth.

She seldom worried about her daughter's gentleman friends. Susan's working week allowed little sparking time, nor had the girl ever seemed overcome by the mere sight of a pair of pants. Besides, she never kept her mother in the dark about her actions; she had found that the family wheels ran smoother so. Had Susan been a son instead of a daughter she might have been mother-smothered, but women never easily dominate their female offspring. Counter-fires come too naturally to them.

Seeing Mrs. Fiske's "Tess" was simply scrumptious, Susan told Margaret afterward. The Bunch was simply grand, too, lively but genteel university friends of Caleb's and their ladies. Susan trooped with them to Dumont's Minstrels, to see William Gillette do *Secret Service*, to dinner at the Bingham House, and once to after-theater oysters at Marble Terrace. The Bunch included a young married couple who played chaperon for appearances, which was nice. The only catch for Susan was the long trolley ride home; when parties were not held on week ends her seven-to-five trick at the Arsenal dragged, but, even so, she felt that moving among charming people was worth its cost in sleep.

"Why can't that Hawkins fella bring you home instead of loading you on the streetcar?" Margaret complained. "Warren always does!"

"Because of his early classes, that's why," Susan said. "And I'm perfectly safe on the cars. The conductor wakes me up at our stop."

She missed Warren, but except for a laconic message on a picture postcard of a pretzel factory—he had not written. . . . A pretzel factory—now wasn't that just like him? Caleb sent candy and corsages with cute notes—would Warren? Pooh! Caleb knew theater people—not the low kind, but the local Drews and Barrymores—and had taken her backstage to meet Anna Held. Warren—he introduced her to policemen and their horses!

Of course, like all men, Caleb sometimes talked jargon about male enthusiasms which left her floundering. Whatever were "shot strings," for heavensake, and what bearing had they on "overchoking" a shotgun? But this was no worse than Warren's love affair with the Phillies—baseballers! Besides, Warren would get wound up about the shame of Philadelphia politics and the menace of Senator Quay; if Caleb ever mentioned politics, it was to joke about William Jennings Bryan's haircut.

Caleb was so urbane, really. He never lunged, but he made a girl feel precious just the same. Why, the way he handed her out of a hansom—it was positively Old World! If all men would only realize how thrilling courtliness could be! . . . Susan had an aching notion that she would stay forever single, because knighthood's flow-

ers had withered, had been married, or existed only in novels or the novel-world of the Biddles, Drexels, and Drexel-Biddles. At times she had walked in the rain without supper, just thinking about it. . . . Caleb Hawkins was a dream made flesh.

Warren sent a boy to Frankford one day in early February when the skies were slaty with snow, to leave word that he was back in town, and would Miss Susan be free that night, huh, and would she telefoam Mr. Stretch?

"Oh darn!" Susan said when her mother told her. "Why didn't he write ahead? Well, it serves him right—I have an engagement!"

Margaret clucked. "Now, not that Hawkins fella again? I declare, you might have him to home once in a while! I ain't even met him, and that ain't right! You traipse overtown all the time—maybe this place ain't good enough for him?"

Susan had wondered about that herself, but because her mother had aired the idea she answered sharply.

"Mr. Hawkins is a gentleman, and he wouldn't care! I haven't encouraged him because I can't see him sitting and looking at albums, or listening to an old windbag like Gus butting in with opinions about the New Bedford strike or Delehanty's home runs or whatever!"

Margaret bit her lip. "I can see through a brick wall as far as the next person—you're ashamed of us! You're very foolish, too, tuckering yourself out chasing after a man who——"

"The idea! Telling your own fleshanblood she's chasing men! Well, talk about who should be ashamed of herself!"

Her mother gave up. "At least you ought to of told me you would be going out. I hate wasting food. It's sinful—just think of them starving Cubans."

"From the smell, it wouldn't be wasted with Gus around," Susan said, and hugged her mother quickly. "He's worth two Cubans when you have stew. Anyhow, you didn't give me a chance to say I was eating at home. We're just spending the evening at the Bradys'."

"Phone up Warren, then, while we wait for Gus. Ain't you interested in what happened to his brother? I am!"

Susan made a face. "The way he beckons at his own pleasure, without considering I might have other fish to fry."

"Don't be so highanmighty. Go on, phone up like a good girl."

"You say I'm running after a man, and look at you—practically throwing me at another!"

"Piffle! I just know my manners. And I like Warren. . . . I declare, sometimes I think the Almighty was just looking for trouble, making men and women different. Well, it pleased Him, so we got to put up with it."

The drugstore on the Penn Street corner had a telephone. Susan cranked and called the *Ledger* and, while waiting for someone to call Warren to answer, read a new sign in the window, between the rubber plant and the jar with the tapeworm. "Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets," it asserted, "Cure Constipation and insure that Love shall be Woman's Natural Heritage." How perfectly disgusting, she thought; modern advertising was getting—

"Hello. Hello? Susan? . . . Going to be home tonight?"

No, she wasn't. There! . . .

"Oh."

She inquired how things were in Reading.

"All right now," he said. "What happened hadn't anything to do with Jim's bereavement. He was taking a walk in the park one night and got knocked on the bean, and woke up in a hospital not knowing who he was. They think ice broke off a limb, which clouted him, because he wasn't robbed or anything. He's back at the hotel now."

"I'm glad, Warren. I was worried, and you didn't write."

"Did you miss me, now?"

"Oh, don't play footsie!"

"Well, Susie, I didn't think family troubles would interest you."

"You 'didn't think,' " she mimicked. "Is that why people write to people, to be interesting? I always heard it was because they ought to."

"O.K. But every day I'd say, 'I'll be back tomorrow,' so I just kept in touch with the office. But then I had to take Jim to Lancaster and—"

"Never mind now. I'd like to hear about it when I see you."

"When?"

"Well, not before Saturday. You see, I——"

"O.K., Saturday it is. I'll call you—— No, by golly, I'll write! How's that?"

"Oh, twentythree-for-you! Come to dinner."

"Fine. . . . Give Caleb my regards. Good-by."

"Good-by. . . . Wait! How did——"

But the connection was broken, and she decided not to call back.

Well! He must have noticed more the night of the ball than she thought. But why wasn't he jealous? Sending offhand greetings to a rival meant—did it mean that he didn't consider that Caleb was in the running? . . .

Snowflakes began to whisk about on her way home, but Susan hardly noticed. She gradually worked up an explanation of Warren's casualness which was irritating enough to be satisfactory. If he made no protest about her seeing Caleb in his absence, it wasn't because he ignored the competition—it must be because he was not competing! He couldn't care much, one way or the other. Remembering the time when he'd kissed her in the trolley, she nodded—he'd stopped mushing merely because he'd been told to, and had *grinned* about it! Why, he should have tried once again anyhow, in spite of rebuff—wasn't he stronger than she? Not that he ought to have been so forward in the first place, mind, but once he'd had at it, a man should persist if only to prove his notion hadn't been an out-of-season summer fancy. But Warren hadn't pressed, so therefore he didn't care. . . .

The Bradys had spiced wine that night, and their "winter picnic," Susan thought, was good fun. A blustering wind drove a continuing snow while the Bunch chattered and laughed; when the party broke up, Susan and Caleb found that the gale had forced transportation off West Philadelphia's streets. They plodded in search of a vacant cab until they were thoroughly cold, and closer to Caleb's apartment than to the house they had left.

"Let's shelter at my place," he suggested. "When we've warmed up a bit I'll have another try at scaring up a hack."

Caleb was a hypocrite, because Caleb felt the hour was ripe for cashing a due bill. His current debtor probably understood too, he thought, for she nodded cheerfully when he spoke. . . . Women were so alike, really! . . .

She wondered whether she was being smart, but excused herself. Ordinarily, respectable girls never went alone to men's quarters, even to carry broth when they were ill; it was tantamount to depravity, like carrying a blanket on a picnic. But now a cruel wind blew snow down inside her none too thick bouclé coat, her thin shoes slipped on hidden ice, and the rare cabs on the streets were occupied. She was mildly astonished that Caleb had not found a cab instantly, for he had the look of a man who does in any kind of weather. He was dependable that way. Besides, he was jolly, and jolly men simply never were cads, at least not in any of Mrs. Southworth's novels.

His warm rooms made her nose ache after the gusts of Chestnut Street. Caleb popped on a gas mantel and poked up a cannel fire. Their lights dissolved in silver hunting cups and polished Indian clubs. A pair of boxing gloves hung over a university pennant; there was a gunrack; there were group photographs of young men in athletic dress posing with folded arms to show that they took the Big Three calmly. The drapes held pleasant man smells—tobacco, gun oil, Madeira. However, Caleb's books were dusty, Susan saw; Buddha on a tobacco jar had had his ears knocked off, and a newspaper was scattered where it had been dropped on the floor. It was a sitting room which would have told any woman that very likely the bed in the next room was unmade.

She noticed, too, evidences of feminine attention: a cloisonné vase held cattails for winter décor; there were a number of unmatched doilies, obviously separate gifts; a print of Fujiyama didn't look like Caleb's idea; and the cushions heaped on every seatable place were embroidered with languishing texts, including a brassy "Love me little, love me long."

Caleb said, "You'd better take off your shoes and dry them at the fire. I'll fix toddies."

"Never mind about a toddy for me," Susan said. "I've got to go when you can find a cab."

She decided he was right about wet shoes, however, so she slipped them off and stretched her toes to the fire after a glance assured her that her stockings were whole. Caleb brought a drink to the chimney place and watched her, smiling.

"Here," he said, "let me toast the piggies."

He knelt and took her feet in his hands. It startled her, but she told herself that his attention was companionable only. It felt good, too, and—well, they did things about feet in the Bible, didn't they?

However, when he plucked at her stockings she sat up and drew her legs under her chair.

"Your hose are wet," he said.

"I'll keep them on, thank you. Besides, if I wanted to take them off, I'd do it myself."

Caleb shrugged. "When I took off your gloves to admire your hands, you were pleased. What's the difference with stockings?"

"I don't walk on my hands, that's the difference!"

"I'm only trying to prevent your catching a cold," he said, smiling as though he were having a hard time believing that himself. He ran a finger lightly up her calf.

She got to her feet abruptly. Without the ladder of shoes, she felt insignificant facing him, but she determined to be matter-of-fact.

"You'd better find that cab. I'm warm now."

"I'm not quite," he said, reeling her in and kissing her.

He released her as efficiently. Surprised in spite of her tenseness, she had begun to struggle just as he let go. What a silly performance that must have seemed, she thought angrily!

"You are rotten," she said, with the back of her hand to her mouth.

Still he smiled, and she detested the superiority of it.

"Why, Susan! You're unjust."

"Let me out of here instantly!"

"Susan," he cooed.

"Keep away! I warn you!"

"Such a good girl. . . ."

He caught her after one lap around the pillow-piled davenport.

Susan's training in ducking the advances of men never had been so cluttered with furniture. Under his lips her own writhed like wires. Once he seemed to be laughing, as if he enjoyed the silly resistance, and she discovered suddenly that she was coldly angry and not frightened a bit.

Behind her she gripped smooth, hard wood—swung it.

Caleb let go and dropped to one knee. Susan raised the Indian club again, but his glazed look told her that another whack would be unmannerly if not unnecessary.

Then she did a peculiar thing.

"Oh, Caleb!" she wailed suddenly, and fell on her knees beside him.

Objects focused again for him. The blow had been crisp but not very hard, for the club had been awkward for her to swing. He sat heavily on the carpet and felt his skull.

"Now what in the hell did you do that for?" he groaned.

"Let me get you some water. A towel. Are you all right?"

"What would I want with a towel?" He seemed more puzzled than resentful. Susan was greatly relieved.

"You could soak it and wrap it around your head."

Something told her not to ask him to repeat what he muttered. When he rose she took his arm, so helpfully that her hundred and ten pounds pulled both of them off balance.

"Please don't be useful," he said. "I don't think I've recovered enough for that."

"Well, I must say!"

"That was a dirty trick, hitting a man when he wasn't looking."

"Listen to who's a judge of dirty tricks! Now you sit still and I'll get a towel."

"Oh, forget your damned towel!"

"Losing your temper will make your head ache worse. . . . Now where did we kick my shoes?"

She found a pan of partly warm water in the kitchen and a partly clean dishcloth and brought them back. Passing a window, she noticed it had stopped snowing, but the wind scolded as loudly as ever. Shutters rattled, and somewhere near by a trash-can lid flew

off, the snow muting its drunken twirling on the pavement. She peered out but saw only one street lamp in the blackness and heard only the hunting wind. She shivered.

"God help sailors on a night like this," Susan said. "I'll never make it home. Here, let me tie this around your head. How's that?"

He glanced in a girandole, and his image in the convex glass made him glance as quickly away. "Just nobby," he said. "If I had a violin I'd play us gypsy music, if I knew how. . . . What do you mean, you won't get home?"

"This bitter-cold windstorm. Nothing will be moving in such weather. Ohdearohdear, Ma will be so upset!"

In spite of himself, Caleb snickered. There wasn't a sign on this pepperbox's face that she feared anything but the wind and her mother's peace of mind. Of himself, he wondered how it were possible for a man to be so amorous one minute and so indiff——

"And your landlord or landlady, what will they think? I'll get you in trouble, not to mention what people will say about me, if they hear."

"My landlord is a bank," he said, "and corporations have no more morality than blood. So let's concern ourselves with your reputation. I haven't the least doubt tongues will wag." He mocked a heavy leer, and added, "So why disappoint them?"

She backed off and snatched up the club again. "Caleb Hawkins, I warn——"

He laughed. "Great Father, put that thing down! I wanted to see your reaction. I've decided to take up a study of Primitive Woman." Testing his knees, he arose and went to look out a front window. "Thank you for not grabbing for a shotgun."

"Don't be annoyed. I'm sorry, Caleb."

"You certainly don't need to apologize," he said. "Anyhow, you want to get home, and——"

The street was white and deserted. He was murmuring, "Well, let's see. . . . Mrs. Bundy downstairs may have a bed," when Susan popped to tiptoes and kissed him. It landed on an ear lobe, and he leaned away.

"Now what? Biting?"

"Don't be silly." After her impulse, she was blushing.

"You don't blame me for wanting to be certain, do you?" he said, and took her loosely in his arms.

She neither drew off nor reached for the club, but smiled uncertainly as he stroked her hair.

"Pretty, scrappy Susie," he said, and kissed her.

She returned his kiss. "See how pleasant it can be?" he said. His voice held no condescension, and his brown eyes smiled with his lips.

Susan felt a yeasty impulse. . . . This was no sweatshop boss with hair in his ears, no foreman who pinched with dirty nails. No pimply boy who had written a word on a wall for her to see. No widower of sixty who missed a body-stove at night. No floorwalker who had sneaked rubs behind the counter. . . . And it wasn't the back seat of a trolley, either. . . .

"It—was nice," she said. "Caleb, do it again, just like . . . Yes, it is nice."

"You are a dismaying creature," he said, and meant it fervently when she began to cry. "Why cry now? Don't you have me balled up enough already?"

She hid her face against his shoulder. "I used to say—I'd only kiss the man—I'd marry—like that."

Caleb took a bearing; he had been in this part of the forest before.

"There can be love in marriage," he said, "but there's always marriage in love." He had used the line on a number of occasions; it had a plausible ring, said with a dreamy nasality.

"Do you love me, Caleb?"

"Of course, dear."

"Say so, then."

"Of course I love you."

"Mmm. You lie."

"All right."

"Practice makes perfect."

"I love you—enough."

"That I believe."

"Stay with me tonight, Susan."

"No."

"I want you to want to."

"I want to, but I won't."

But she did. She recalled long afterward, when memories are satchet, that another kiss did it. . . . And what, if he were sweet, what did it matter? She was sleepy tired, but more weary of evasion. She remembered sandpipers she'd seen on a cut-rate excursion to Wildwood who ran back and forth with the wash of the waves. That's me, she said. Keep teasing the ocean, but don't get your feet wet. . . .

She crept out unseen and unheard before dawn. The wind beast of the night had turned into a petulant old tomcat, but the morning was cold as a shroud. A workman with a dinner pail crunched past, steaming through his muffler; down the block toward the Drexel Institute a milkman jingled his wire basket, and his blanketed horse leaned forward against the harness to keep abreast of the stoop-chasing man. Susan began to walk slowly toward the Chestnut Street bridge. On its midtown side several car lines would be running.

She scarcely considered what excuses she would offer her mother, or to the foreman at the Arsenal. As she slipped along in the powdery snow, lying in whorls, dunes, and barenesses, the blood within her was as cold as the morning. Her mind wrestled dumbly with a disappointment and a humiliating regret. . . .

For goodnessake, was *that* all there was to it?

v

"Mr. President," Warren said, tidying his cowlick in the mirror, "how do you like Philadelphia, no doubt?"

His reflection simulated Mr. McKinley, and his voice dropped to profundity.

"Mr. Spangles, I love Philadelphia. There are a great many votes here, fine, upstanding Republican votes. For them I would even eat scrapple."

"The name's Spangler, Mack. . . . Well, that answer was manly enough. Let's see—what about our Society of the Barons of Runnymede? You know, that little club we Cadwaladers and Lees founded here last month, along with some of the provincial aristocracy from New York, New Haven, and Hartford?"

"If they vote Republican, I love them also, Dangler. My eyes fill with tears when I think of all the lovely, lovely voters!"

"Use your handkerchief, Your Excellency, and spare Mrs. Workman's costly rugs."

"I love everybody, Mr. Strangler. Permit me to buy you a beer."

"Thanks, Bill, but——"

Mrs. Workman knocked and wheezed, "Seven o'clock," derailing Warren's toy train of thought.

He shucked into his overcoat and clumped downstairs, humming because he was happy. Today he would achieve a by-line. Today he would meet the President of the United States. Today, today, ta-ra-ra-boom-today!

Today was, besides the hundred and sixtysixth anniversary of Washington's birth, University of Pennsylvania Day and Shrove Tuesday. Warren Spangler, Wharton '93, watched his shriven and unshriven successors parade into the Academy of Music, played on by their band. When George Washington's heir appeared on the stage with their provost, the college boys set up a hoo-rah, hoo-rah, Penn-syl-vay-nyah, repeated three times and followed by "McKinley! McKinley! McKinley!" Warren made a note that the tag of the Long Hoorah didn't have the sis-boom-ah of team! team! team! Picklepuss probably would line it out, but . . .

He had said, "Here's a daisy of a chance, Spangler. Get the color! We'll have the President's speech, so don't waste time on that. Get the color, and whatever else of news value you can pick up. Use your eyes and ears, and that knob between your ears!"

. . . Well, Warren said to himself as he began to jot down notes, the old Academy's jam full. If Penn's twentyeight hundred haven't packed it clear to fourth balcony, it'll only be because some got left out. Funny thing: they honor the University—which was students and instructors—by seating all the fat cats in the places

of honor. Hear ye, hear ye, hizzoner the Mayor! Make way for the Councils, the Sheriff, the Union League, and Commissioners of Fairmount Park! We are favored also by the Army, the Navy, the clergy, and probably the Chief of Boiler Inspection. Hi there, Mulrooney—didja bring ya lunch and the missus?

The world will very little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but, by God, we're here! Edjagation's the hope of the world, yessir, and our forefathers—always gotta have forefathers at these kind of clambakes, never foremothers—are rotating in their tombs because there ain't diplomas on every wall alongside of the Burpee Seed calendar.

The fat cats will nod gravely, while their sisters, aunts, and cousins by the dozens are soaking up prestige. Think of being in the same room with the President of the United States! The office itself emanated a benediction. Fans curled more proudly, silks rustled more silkily, academic gowns dropped fewer silver fish, and the starched shirts crackled a *Te Deum*. *Sic transit gloria McKinley*, *ave* atque hooray. Only the caryatids wouldn't care, and later the scrubwomen: "It ain't the mashed popcorn I mind so much, Katie; it's this here goddam chewing gum!"

While he maundered, the working lobe of Warren's brain humped away at its task. "Provost Harrison's eloquent introduction touched off thunderous cheers. . . . The President's benign smile was . . . The dresses of the ladies were . . . The applause was . . ."

The whole shooting match, as he saw it, was a mere preliminary to an opportunity he hoped to seize at the reception afterward. W. M. Spangler of the *Ledger* wanted to ask a question of the President of the United States which had nothing to do with University Day or Shrove Tuesday.

"Big Bill's going out to look at the university library," a *Press* man told Warren.

"Now that should be edifying," Warren said glumly, but it was on the red steps of that morbid rookery that he got his chance to speak to Mr. McKinley.

"The *Ledger* would like to know, Mr. President," he said, grate-

ful for the brace the third-person neuter gave his voice, "if the Maine Commission determines Spanish guilt, whether it will mean w-war."

All the reporters watched the President closely. Some looked annoyed at the questioner; others, like Owen Wister, there for Harper's, smiled at his candor.

The big shoulders of McKinley sagged in his frock coat. "This country abhors war. I too—I—we must suspend judgment entirely until the Commission makes its report. That is the fair, the American thing to do."

"B-b-but——" said Warren.

"Thank you, Mr. President," another newspaperman said. "May we ask how you like Philadelphia?"

McKinley smiled and raised a winged eyebrow. "You wouldn't expect a derogatory answer, would you?" Warren wrote: (Laughter.) "However," continued the President, "one feature of Philadelphia is outstanding: the respect you show for one's privacy." An elderly reporter glared at Warren. "The retiring dispositions of Philadelphians give me no hesitation whatever to walk from my hotel to, say, the Union League through fear of having my progress interrupted."

When the handshaking was over, Warren caught a hack to Sixth and Chestnut with Tweed, the fiercely mustached sketch artist who had been assigned to the story with him. Winter's early darkness fell as he finished writing; like most of his fellows, Warren scorned the slow typewriting machines. When he passed his copy in, the city editor read the sheets rapidly and, without a word, penciled "By W. M. Spangler" at the head of the first.

"There's nothing new to the squib about the Maine," Picklepuss said, "except that McKinley said it again in this pueblo. . . . Mr. Davis has asked to see this—I don't know why. I'm glad it's no more imbecilic than usual."

"I'll b-buy you a drink on that!"

"Git! Pour one down Tweed. His tongue fell to his spats when you said 'drink.'"

Triumph makes men generous; Warren bought for the Pro-

fessor, too, when he and Tweed went to McGovern's saloon. The old man was shooting his cuffs over the free lunch when they scuffed in through the sawdust and Andy, the bartender, was bearing down on him swinging a knotted bar rag. The Professor stepped back on Tweed's toes.

"Damnation!" Tweed said.

"Well met," said the Professor quickly. "What detained you? Tut, tut"—he checked a reply—"refreshment first, explanations afterward. Andrew, my good Ganymede, take my friends' orders and bring them to the table in the corner. Does that suit you, Warren my boy?"

Warren said it did, and their self-invited host piled a plate with herring, cheese, sheep's tongue, and crackers.

"I trust you will forgive this intrusion," the old man said as they took seats at one of the pumiced tables, "but I am lamentably distressed for ready cash, as Uncle Ike's pawnshop sign says. The human stomach, however, snubs trivialities like money when it demands its due. One can sometimes reason with Uncle Ike or Andrew, but with the *sphincter pylori*—never!"

"You're a fraud, Professor, and you know it," Tweed said, lifting his mustache with a forefinger, "but here's to you. And to Stretch, the up-and-comer."

"*Salud*," said the old man, and tossed off his whisky neat. When he beckoned for a refill the bartender's eyelids inquired what-ho of Warren before bringing it.

Warren had found the Professor an entertaining moocher. The old goat would not accept a drink from a stranger, for instance, but when he had been presented formally he became a man's nightlong friend. Unlike On-the-Ball, who timed streetcars with a tomato-can "watch," the Professor was no loony downtown character. He never wore medals, nor clothing more eccentric than the missions handed out, and he not only warmed and napped at the Public Library but read there too. Some said he had taught at Harvard, others said Wellesley; which, made less difference to the myths than one might suppose. Harvard had dismissed him because he had begun philosophical experiments with morphine

which got out of hand; Wellesley, according to those believers, had slipped him the skids for another kind of research which lost its innocence, while several undergraduates lost theirs.

Like a fond uncle, he congratulated Warren on his reportorial milestone.

"Ah," he said when he heard of the Maine question, "Arthur would not have parried you. He——"

"Arthur who?" Tweed asked.

"Not Arthur who—Chester Alan Arthur, late twentyfirst President of these federal states. The only great Arthur of our times."

"Excuse it," Tweed said.

"How about T. S. Arthur, the great novelist?" Warren said. "He wrote *Ten Nights in a Barroom*."

"I am aware of it," said the Professor, "although I deplore it. I was reminded, *exempli gratia*, of an instance when a nosy woman demanded that C. A. Arthur make a statement to the country on his abstinence from alcoholic beverages. He replied, 'Madam, as President I am accountable to you as a public servant, but as a private citizen my habits are none of your damned business.' Cheers!" He tossed off Tweed's glass.

"Hear, hear!" Warren lifted his sarsaparilla. "Gentlemen, I give you Chester Alan Arthur, defender of the faith, lion of lost manhood, champion of——"

"Damn you, Professor," Tweed said, "that was my rock-and-rye!"

"How absurd of me. Andrew!—another rock-and-rye for the gentleman. Make mine Jack Pot whisky, of course."

"You and your 'of course,'" said the bartender.

"What I asked the President was a question of public concern," Warren said. "The people ought to know the answer."

"The people or the *Ledger*?" asked the Professor through a mouthful of herring.

"Same thing. A newspaper informs its subscribers."

"I'm astonished by your cynicism," said the old man, showering Tweed with crackercrums on the sibilants. "However, you must have your *raison d'être*. After all, you write the stuff."

"No spik Franch," Warren said. "English it."

"Well, let's see—do you believe that Spanish children have wailed for Cuban ears to play with?"

"No. Scovel and the *World* boys must have thought that up between beers."

"I offer it as a pungent example of the 'information' certain newspaper subscribers get."

"The Spaniards stick bulls for fun, and that's a fact," Tweed said. "What a race!"

The shabby old man regarded the artist kindly. "Possibly you enjoy prize fights, say?"

"Sure. I saw Fitz land that solar-plexus punch on Corbett last year. Wow! Did you, Stretch?"

"Such a spectacle would revolt a Spaniard to his marrow," said the Professor. "Conceive of it—two of God's images battering each other with their fists! After all, in a *corrida* only a soulless bull and a few worn-out horses fall. The S.P.C.A. wouldn't allow that here, but a Spaniard might find it ironic that our S.P.C.A. also has had to prosecute brutal mothers as a side line."

He belched politely behind his hand and said, "I should like to know how 'Ruby Robert' Fitzsimmons ever got the middle name of Prometheus, the Firegiver."

"You don't know?" Tweed said. "I thought you knew everything, had read all the books, and had written most of them."

"Men are men," the Professor said, ignoring Tweed. "Concrete facts. Man, Nation, Society are abstractions, but their convenience as symbols misleads us into thinking that a race, a group following a religious creed, or a state is real in the same sense that an individual man is."

"Too bad George Washington didn't know that," said Tweed contemptuously. "He'd have stayed home and et cherries. Why, you confounded old anarchist, the U.S.A. is a real, Portland-cement fact, dammit!"

"Get aboard, Tweedy, you're missing the boat," Warren said. "Excuse him, Professor. He always hears the eagle scream when he's had a snort. What you mean is that America isn't a toothed,

brained, or tongued fact, but is nevertheless real because we say so?"

"Quite right, my boy. Nationality is a common agreement which has no existence apart from that agreement. The agreement is justifiable, but we cannot say that any American—or Spaniard—is the least common denominator of his nationality. No, by the hair of Hector—no man is a fraction! We are whole, separate creatures before anything else. Some happen accidentally to be born within this, that, or the other fiction which are called nations, and——"

"I should snicker," Tweed said, twirling his handle bars. "And all the little accidents aren't just where, but how and when."

"Your mind needs laundering," Warren said. "Have another wet-me-down, Professor? Tweedy?"

"Certainly," said the old man absently, but alertly enough. "You see, when we forget that a Spaniard is a man, it becomes easy to pile middens of trash about him. He becomes a myth, a salamander, a cyclops. He becomes, in short, The Spaniard, one of a den of interchangeable ogres. As public gossips, the newspapers help the myth along: all Spaniards are fiends, all Cubans are patriots, all Americans are Heaven's watchmen. Any fool in town who has a penny for a paper can read that he, too, is a proctor of world morality, merely because some whore happened to drop him in the United States. 'Inform,' indeed! The penny press is bought by its readers for thrills, like Rider Haggard!"

"A myth is a fact when people act on it," Warren said. "And the Ledger isn't a penny paper. It——"

Tweed said, "Anybody want to play darts while I can see the cork?"

The Professor stared into his empty glass and went on talking. The artist groaned and wandered off back. Warren stayed with the old man; he listened to anyone who seemed to be assured of what he was saying, for Warren's prayer was to be someday assured himself. . . . The house of truth may have appeared monolithic to the Professor, but to Warren there were many doors. How the hell does a man choose? . . .

"For specific instances of your daily fictions," said the old man, "how about the Cuban girl who the *Journal* alleged was stripped and searched by Spanish soldiers on an American boat? Untrue—she herself denied it."

"Richard Harding Davis resigned over the treatment his story was given," Warren said.

"I do not deny the existence of honest reporters or fair papers. However, did the expulsion of American journalists from Havana choke off their 'eyewitness' accounts of atrocities in the interior of Cuba, where few ever went? Of course not; they haven't even changed their date lines to Key West instead of Havana. . . . Have they ever thought that the Cisneros girl might have been guilty of sedition and conspiracy to murder the Spanish governor? Gracious no!—she is a woman and a Cuban. Besides, she said the governor lusted after her."

"You're damning us all for isolated inaccuracies and sensationalism," Warren said. "I wouldn't shut down the colleges because of a few lying or incompetent professors, would you?"

The old man rattled his glass on the table, but Warren missed the hint. "No, but the lies of the press don't remain isolated when syndicates and news associations spread them. Any ramshackle rumor becomes God's sweet truth by the help of linotype and the Associated Press. . . . A man from the *Daily Shriek* might hear in a Florida saloon how Cuban women were drafted to hootchy-kootch, or something, for a Spanish saturnalia. He telegraphs the chestnut—ascribed to a 'returned Tampa businessman of unimpeachable integrity'—and the Associated Press may pick it up from its member, the *Shriek*. Since many congressmen enjoy vicarious rape as much as housewives, one of them may inject the A.P.'s item into a Senate debate. The final arc of the huge zero closes when the *Daily Shriek* in triumph doth reprint its fable from the *Congressional Record*—and so do a hundred cautious papers who might never have given it a sniff."

"I'm glad you recognize a hundred cautious papers," Warren said.

"I wonder," said the Professor, "if the publisher ever drew breath who voluntarily printed the lines, 'I was dead wrong. I'm sorry.'"

He puzzled over Tweed's tumbler, which mysteriously had appeared in his hand, but swallowed the drink before it should vanish.

"But the Spaniards have committed terrible crimes in Cuba," Warren said. "Cruelty is——"

"—no state monopoly of the Spanish," said the Professor. "The quiet Danes once whipped men around trees to unravel their guts. A king of England ate human flesh. And I have heard it argued that Yankee frontiersmen taught Indians to scalp who had not heard of the custom. Yet I never read of Cuban atrocities—have they no imagination?"

Warren suddenly remembered his father's voice . . . his tales of Andersonville Prison during the war with the South. "Those skinny militiamen, old men and boys, on the walls of the Bull Pen," Dad had said, "didn't think of us as men when they shot us. We were demons utterly unlike themselves. . . ."

Tweed came back to the table, saw that he must have finished his drink, and ordered another.

"Thank you, I shall be glad to join you," said the old man.

"You read minds too?" the artist said, winking at Warren. "Well, if you two deep thinkers have thrashed out the nation's—excuse me, I meant the Myth's—problems, let a voter in on it."

"We needed you for a quorum," Warren said. "What's our ukase, Professor?"

The old man shook his head. "Innocents from Butte, Kokomo, and Shamokin have proclaimed themselves capable of straightening out Cuba on twentyfour hours' notice. School children have burned men in effigy. Hell has seethed in Cuba for almost a hundred years, but now suddenly Cuba exists for us."

"Our businessmen will keep us out of war," Tweed said. "They know that shooting will upset our prosperity."

"Ignoring the questionable morality of their reason, I concede the hope," said the Professor, "but it shouldn't be long before they will revise their opinions, especially if the war is inexpensive. Why should flabby pirates like the British, French, and Dutch have profitable empires and we have none?"

He sighed. Warren signaled the bartender and paid the check, leaving the old man with a double Jack Pot for company. After they had said good night Tweed asked his friend home to dinner.

"Ivy's used to boiling another potato. Come on, you'll be welcome."

"Why, thanks, I will," Warren said. "I didn't expect home cooking until Saturday. Lead on."

"What's up Saturday?"

"Oh, a girl I met. She can cook."

"Well! You got a girl, huh?"

"I—guess so. What's the matter? Is it illegal?"

Tweed laughed and drew his neck into his fur collar. "No. Aside from occasional skirt-tossings, I didn't know you were interested. How long has this been going on?"

"Not very long."

"Well, be sure to tell Ivy. Women love to hear about prospective weddings."

"Say, matters haven't reached that stage yet! I'm not kicking doors down in my passion, especially since Susan's a nice girl. You can't rush them."

"Pfft!" Tweed blew out his mustache.

"That's what I said!"

"All right, all right, but let me tell you something: when she makes up her mind to marry you, you're a cooked gander, bub!"

vi

Behind the Bridge Street guardhouse of the Frankford Arsenal stands a small stone shaft bearing a Masonic emblem and a battered message:

. . . *HEZ' BRIDLE* . . .
 . . . *U. S. Inf.* . . .
 . . . *A.D. 1826 in th.* . . .
 . . . *of his age to whom* . . .
 . . . *a fellow soldier* . . .

This unknown soldier is more alien than the trees near by, because even Susan could have told how Commodore Perry had brought them back from Japan with a treaty and other junk. No record remains of " . . .hez' Bridle," of his rank or service, nor of where his body lies, nor what he did to inspire a cenotaph to keep his memory bright among generations who have preserved the monument, if not the memory.

Gus Kelley brought the gray column into a discourse one nippy February morning, and jarred Susan Brecht.

"So they convicted Zola, they did, whilst a mob of Paris scum screamed, 'Death to the Jews!' They've convicted him for holding the notion that even Jews like Dreyfus has got rights. All Zola asked for himself was the ornery consideration a common thief could expect, but that sourcasm was over the judge's head. Ah well, men'll die for principles. . . ." Seeing the stone, he parenthesized, "Maybe just as soldier Bridle did."

Susan walked on silently, uninterested, until the old windbag said, "Maybe he, too, believed that living is more than using up air and making stool. Life for life's sake is O.K., but 'tis like virginity: it defeats itself if carried too far. . . . Now what?"

She regretted her intake of breath, and managed a smile.

"Nothing. A corset bone stuck me, or something."

. . . She had jumped at a random remark, she thought; it proved she had a lot of purity left, didn't it? Women who were ruined often wouldn't start at the mere mention of lost innocence, would they? . . .

The clock under the north peak of the Small Arms Building said five minutes before seven, so she loitered in the cold outside rather than share chatter in the corridors. Once the shafting began to turn, conversation became unnecessary, and for some days now Susan had been indisposed toward chitchat and wherever possible had avoided the necessity of explaining her unusual indifference.

Once inside, she put on her smock and sat at a table in the primer room to begin earning another day's dollar-and-two-cents. As a newcomer a year before, she had feared the stuff of death she worked with, but she was like a lady lion tamer: she had entered

the cage often enough to be on standoff terms with the beast. Besides, Ordnance had developed a better, safer mixture—H-48, whatever that meant—which you spread and rolled and jiggled into the primer-cap blanks, as always.

The trouble with knowing a task too well was the time you had to mull your worries. . . . Whywhy did girls have to suffer, when men never did? Men, with their glib ways and casual ribaldries—they who could afford to be casual! They winked when Nellie Whatsername—the stock-room girl with a cast in one eye—had left employment; the buzz of women's talk about Nellie's "tumor" hadn't been half so mortifying as the knowing smirks of the men, darn—damn them! . . .

Her practical ignorance frightened Susan; for all the gossip she had heard in salesladies' rooms and at church suppers, she did not know how women trafficked with men and managed to avoid little visitors. Girls who were "naughty, but nice," as the men's disgusting phrase went, knew whatever it was that the virtuous Old Lady in the Shoe hadn't. Susan now wished she had been less disdainful of the giggled details—after all, if such knowledge was not improving, at worst it was useful. As Warren had said, life wasn't all peaches and cream; there were stones in the peaches and flies in the pitcher. Warren was smart, Warren was kindly—oh, Warren, Warren! . . .

He almost commented on the fact that her cuperosity wasn't sagaciating very well when he came to dinner that evening, bearing roses. She was wan, abstracted, forgetting even to enthuse over his news of his by-line. . . . Doggone, it hurt, and that was a fact. What was more, she made only a piddling fuss over the greenhouse roses which had had people in the trolley gawping. . . . He gave her mother an inquiring look.

Ma Brecht's long face reddened. . . . That morning she had thrown a shawl over her head and gone to use a tellyphone for the first time in goodnessknows how long; the last time, she remembered, the phone company book told a person that "all conversations should close by exchanging the signal 'O.K.'" Margaret did not trust any contraption which had electricity chasing through it,

nor did she really believe anybody could hear over wires; for all the volume she put into her voice, she might have saved her nickel by raising the sash and facing toward the "Ledger-newspaper."

But she'd felt an inclination toward conspiracy and wanted to hint to Warren her Susie's partiality to bo-kays. She liked Warren Spangler, and despised seeing the boy's nose being put out of joint by that brash Hawkins fella. What had gone on between *him* and her daughter Margaret guessed, and refused to think about. . . . She had had a loud scene with the girl when Susan had come home that awful morning last week, which ended in double hysterics and had not been mentioned since. A shiftless husband, lifelong hardship, and the fierceness of her own mother had undone Margaret; she could fight a skirmish but never a campaign, and especially not with the headstrong child who supported her.

The home cooking he had anticipated went flat in Warren's mouth, and his chipper conversation petered out when it began to echo in the room like the kind he sang down iron culverts when he had been a kid. Gus's ready tongue was missing—it was Golden Slipper Club night—and Margaret's hectic attempts to be conversational accentuated the anxiety she tried to conceal as a fig leaf disenchanting a statue. Susan professed an aggravating headache at last—she'd been working too hard, probably—her eyes were strained, her stomach was upset, Scott's Emulsion gagged her—oh, no doubt she'd hear about her Civil Service test soon—a new job as timekeeper would make an improvement all around, odear-yes.

"Susan, how about a vacation?" Warren said on the porch when he left. "Florida, how about it? I saw excursion posters in the Plant System window on Fourth Street. . . . Oh, sh-shucks! You could pay me back, if you w-wanted to."

Warren was so Genuine, she thought in bed that night, and, dwelling on how unspurious he was, she spotted her pillow with tears. Men like Warren gave to those women fortunate enough to land them feelings of security far and away above plain roof and board. A Husband in the Finest Sense of the Word, she squeaked into her soggy pillow, while Gus Kelley rose to try to hunt down

whatever durn spigot was gurgling just loud enough to be interesting.

However, a week later, as testimonials for Wine of Cardui put it, "she became unwell, and was delighted." Apprehension and remorse ended, she determined to devote herself to Warren; she was certain that her lesson in humility must have a significance, had been meant to point the way to the Real Thing, and Warren was It.

She almost overwhelmed him, as a matter of fact. During March they resumed the gay intimacy which had made January happy, but with something added: a Susan who was as much giving as she dared to be. She dumfounded her man by studying his interests, for one thing. When he spoke vernal-blooming hopes for the Phillies, she did not wrinkle her nose as once she had, exclaiming, "Oh, baseballers," but accurately distinguished Lajoie from Delehanty and Orth from Donohue, and hoped they "would get a lot of good practice at Cape May." She followed the articles Warren was writing about the morbose Schuylkill Valley Water Company, knew who Mr. Stevenson was, and knew why it was remarkable that a councilman had refused and reported a bribe. When shad began to run in the Delaware she went into hock to stun Warren and the other shad lovers dining at Bookbinder's. She bought a new rustproof corset, and Vici Kid shoes, did her hair *à la chute d'eau*, and saw that her Sunday melton suit hugged her curves as if it loved the work. She was electric, and through his buzz Warren suddenly recalled Tweedy's chaff: "When a woman makes up her mind to marry you, you're a cooked gander, bub!"

He was flattered, amused, and, being a Lancaster Dutchman, also somewhat guarded. All this high-g geared charm for him? he wondered. He decided to ask a leading question, but got nowhere with it.

"Caleb?" she answered with a frown. "Caleb? Oh, you mean the nice man who took me home that time! No, I haven't seen him for weeks. . . ."

Which was true enough, goodness knows, although not because he hadn't proposed it, but she had bundled him about his business, let us tell you! "My dear Mr. Hawkins," she had written after ignor-

ing his first two notes, "you have the advantage of me. I seem to disremember whom you are. I am, truly yours, (Miss) Susan Brecht." *Hauteur*, as aloof dignity was called in Miss Atherton's books, fixed his wagon all right! He hadn't peeped since.

Warren persisted mildly. "I thought you'd been going around with him while I was away?"

"Oh, that! Goodnessake, he just filled in time, you might say."

"Well, doggone!" Warren said, and she blushed without forced draft.

One doubt haunted her still, but when she tried to exorcise it toward the end of the month Gus failed her. They were on their way home and were passing Bridle's cenotaph when she broached the matter.

"Tell me something, Gus, about something you said a while back."

"Sure, if you can remind me what it was. Lots of times I just turn on me mouth and go off leaving it running."

"You said that virg—how dare-st I say it?"

He snorted. "Why worry about a perfectly proper word? What's obscene about virginity?"

"Well, let me make up an example—you know, purely imaginary. Let's say there's a girl who's been a good girl, but makes a misstep. You follow me?"

"It don't rupture me powers."

"She makes this misstep——" Susan fumbled and stopped, thinking that discussing such a subject impersonally was both tricky and bothersome.

"I got that," Gus said.

"Don't rush me! I've got to think as I go along."

"Well, f'rinstance, is this gal anybody we'd know, or is she from Pittsburgh? Did she know which end was up, or not? Was she drug by the hair, or did she enjoy herself, or both? There's all kinds of missteps—that's a real snaky word."

"We-e-ll, she might be like a girl at the Arsenal, say. Yes, that would be easier to describe. I don't know anything about this—this 'enjoy' business. I——"

He managed to smother a laugh and its symptoms. Susan looked vaguely about the street and took the plunge. "Well, let's imagine that she—she was disappointed with the whole shooting match . . . or does that sound queer?"

The old man jerked his head up sharply—the gal could be any of the ones at the Arsenal, hey? "No," he said aloud, "it don't sound queer. I guess Eve looked up at the Tree after her first climb with Adam and decided the serpent had overrated the taste of its fruit. Me late wife was like that, to be personal, even though I never had any complaints from—— Let it pass. Anyhow, I read somewhere that 'the sport of love wants learning too, the same as fiddle playing.'"

Susan stared at him helplessly; if he was making fun of her she felt she ought to be angry, but she couldn't always tell about Gus, nor did she know how to show acerbity without giving herself away.

"Would you mind leaving out serpents and fiddles?" she said. "Darn it, Gus, can't you understand they have nothing to do with a woman who *weakened*? Smart women, and even good ones, weaken, don't they?"

He agreed, but said nothing. If she had not been so furtive about meeting his eye Susan might have noticed how alarmingly Gus was adding psychical twos and twos and getting correct fours. . . . The red-eyed atmosphere between Susie and her ma a few weeks ago, he thought, brought an end to the gal's trips downtown. Then she'd had vapors afterward, which blew away in a rush of hoorah for big Stretch. And now she was wheedling for some kind of assurance from sweet, dumb old Gus—uh-huh! . . .

"Now this girl I have in mind," Susan continued, "got smitten with a high-class man, say like a—a—oh, a librarian, and that made her misstep easier, you see. Just like they say in books, she didn't really love him, but she thought she did, and he didn't—um—push her at first, even though she half wanted him to. But he took advantage of her, see?"

Gus squeezed his eyes shut and shook his head as if to clear it. "Not when you gabble like that, I can't. How can a man take

advantage of a woman when she's making him feel high-class, wanted, and without push?"

"I said, she thought she was in love. She wanted to know about love."

"Uh-huh. So now she's got the pretty little plaything on her hands, like a cocker spaniel gone fat and blind."

"August Kelley, who's telling this story!"

"'Scuse. All right, what chapter are we up to?"

"Well, what I want to know is: is she any good—you know—afterward?"

He whooped, and despite her annoyance Susan felt relieved.

"Lord love us, Susie, do you mean to say you ever gave skull room to an idea that a woman's ruined by being had?"

"Don't be indelicate! I was referring to outright folly."

"Well, it is a folly often, and no mistake, but so is touching a hot stove lid or looking for gas leaks with a candle. But, unless being dumb's a sin, they ain't sinful. Is that what you wanted to hear?"

"But girls are condemned right and left——"

"Sure they are, and among the loudest Bible bangers are reformed harlots that were lucky to escape into marriage. Then there is the Miss Willardses, whose maiden veins don't itch no more, if they ever did. What do dry sticks know about passion—how can you renounce something you never had? Howsomever, the earth's cluttered with hard-shell Cur-ristians who suspek their Teacher was ontirely too durn sympathetic toward the Woman Taken in Adultery."

"Not just dry sticks do the talking, Gus. Lots of men do too. After all, you can't get around the Seventh Commandment."

"Susie, I just got done mentioning a young Man who felt pretty strong against bigots sitting judgment on His laws."

"I'm—it still worries me."

He tried to see her face, but they had just passed an island of lamplight and had not yet reached the next.

"Why, Susie?" he asked.

The softness of his voice almost trapped her; she began to

answer truthfully, but forced a cough in time. "Pardon. . . . Oh, nothing—I just wanted to know how you stood on such things. Don't get the notion this has anything to do with me, for it doesn't."

"Sure."

"One last question: suppose this girl got a proposal of marriage from a genuine young man—not the one who took advantage. Should she tell him about her misstep?"

The burly old man chuckled fatly. "If she's a natural-born idiot, she will."

"Oh, I know it might wreck her chances, but mustn't she be fair irregardless? Not let him marry a girl who was not all she pretended to be, and—you know?"

"What's she pretending to be except a gal who wants to be married?"

"You're being deliberately dense, Gus Kelley!"

"I'm not sure, I'm just not sure," he said, shaking his head, "and I don't think your gal knows what she means, either."

"What does it matter? It's only a hytho—hypo—one of those imaginary cases."

"It sounds like somebody I know."

Susan was afraid to ask whom.

Gus waved a broad hand. "Well, suppose this girl's second young man was pure and he asked the gal point-blank was she pure or not?"

"Why, the idea of such gall!" Susan said, quite involuntarily.

The old man smiled. "O.K. Now if he'd be prissy and impudent, what do you think of a young lady who'd encourage that attitude in men? Your trouble comes from——"

"Not my trouble!"

"I forgot. Well, Miss Goody Twoshoes's trouble comes from reading too much Ella Wheeler Wilcox poetry, seems to me. Let's be honest and take our hands off the scales, as the butcher said, and you tell me in what way a woman is spoiled by being taken by or giving herself to a man."

"I'm sure I wouldn't know," she said primly.

"Nor me, neither, unless she was overripe for rottenness to begin with, like a fallen pear."

"Gus!"

"Just one of those imaginary cases," he said blandly.

"You be careful how you talk, that's all I ask, just be careful."

He walked silently a minute and then said, "Nope, Susie, I can't tell you what I think and 'be careful' the way you like. I ain't a feller that thinks love is a mad dog whose bite calls for serum and prayer. By gosh, *that's* why we have women trotting to lawyers these days trying to find out ways to marry a man and keep it both legal and 'innocent.' It's dodgasted ridicklous, but they're doing it just the same. Anyhow, what's bothering you is more than my manner of talking, Susie."

"I'm sure I don't know what you mean."

"You are?"

"I'm sorry I ever brought this up!"

He put a thick arm about her shoulders. They had come close to home and saw Margaret peering out for them, a friendly shadow in an orange window. Susan half turned to her companion to say something impulsive—something honest, too, by the look of her, Gus thought—but then broke away and ran into the house.

He followed at a normal walk. As her figure darkened going away, to be relit brilliantly in the doorway, he muttered under his breath:

"She never had a chance to be anything except mixed up. . . . Spare a thought for that long-legged feller she's a-gunning for, too, if You please. Amen."

vii

Smoke and fellowship were thick in McGovern's Alehouse, and one made the Professor blink while the other made him love mankind.

"Our frontier has gone," he said, "but the itch to push it outward has not. The Indian has been whipped into dry corners of

the country and is safe, because not even the bodies of his dead can fertilize those lands profitably for his conquerors. We have wearied of our beloved hatreds, of the North for the South, farmer for townsman, debtor for creditor, but we are unified by discovering that Europe hates us. So, to work off energy and show the bastards, we shall jump the Spaniard. Thirtythree tiresome years after Apomattox young men again will die in numbers large enough to thrill the most exacting patriot."

Warren Spangler squinted through the haze, wondering if its sting alone had brought tears to the old man's eyes. A trickle of saliva ran from a corner of the Professor's mouth, too, and Tweed and a *Record* man passed a look which said, "He sure can't hold his liquor the way he used to."

"Say, Professor," Tweed said, "are you Spanish? I mean, have you any Spanish blood?"

The old man nodded. "Yes," he said, and Tweed looked satisfied until the quavering voice continued. "I also have the blood of the Chinese, Bulgarians, Peruvians, and Kaffirs. In the same sense, I am the babe in the womb and the corpse in the coffin, and 'whatever degrades another degrades me, and whatever is done or is said returns at last to me.'"

"Godalmighty!" whispered Tweed.

"Don't all that keep you kind of busy?" the *Record* man asked.

Warren stopped chewing cuticle to say, "Professor, I wish I understood. These two guys here don't give a damn, and that's all right, but don't pay any attention to them. Look—if we just wanted to prove our strength, wouldn't we pick on those sword-rattling Prussians? Nobody likes them either."

"Son, they are not so expedient. The Spaniard is: he is dark-skinned, Roman Catholic, weak, and easier to get at. Our constipated Army and muscle-bound Navy will have a light exercise, and not a deathly struggle on their hands as with the Germans."

"I can lick any son of a bitch my weight in the world," Tweed said, beating his breast.

"I can lick anybody in this saloon," the *Record* man said, and they both laughed.

The Professor said, "How easy it is to fall into the error of personification, as I did about the Army and Navy. An army cannot die with a throatful of blood, nor a navy with fish nibbling away its lips. However, you boys can."

"Cheery old bastard," said Tweed.

"Whom are you calling old?" said the Professor.

He rose with a totter, bowed to the altruists who had bought his last drunk, and went out into the April night, to wind up on a slab at Thirteenth and Wood before morning, kicked to death by a person or persons unknown.

Warren collected enough money from Newspaper Row's working brotherhood to rescue the body from the pickle tank at Medico-Chi, for, unlike their employers, most of the boys believed that charity should not require too close a look at a victim's morals or politics. No one discovered whether the Professor had been done in by a thug enraged over his empty pockets or whether some flophouse patriot had resented being called an inferior of some damned dago named Cervantes. Apart from a hurried investigation of the murder by a patrolman who knew his dinner was cooling while his wife's temper was not, no one cared much. Tweed spoke a requiem for the old man with which most of his associates agreed: "He was a nice old souse, but as impractical as a cut-glass cuspidor."

The practical world, which Tweed revered and the Professor quit, achieved many prodigies by May. The court of inquiry on the *Maine*, refusing Spanish collaboration, found that the vessel might have been blown up by external tampering, an opinion which justified the naval strength we had mounted at Key West for weeks. The state of Iowa felt its coast threatened and voted a half-million-dollar war chest. The Maine Commission's declaration put an end to the whopper-swapping of the yellow press, including one tale that sailors had threatened to desert by the thousands if they were not allowed to avenge their dead.

Mr. Holland's submarine boat, the *Plunger*, kept plunging off Perth Amboy, and its proud inventor offered to blow up the Morro Castle at Havana, the immense thickness of its walls and the fact we were still at peace being mere trifles for the *Plunger*. A

hundred Kentucky colonels volunteered to clean out Cuba personally, while the battleship *Kentucky* was christened with water instead of bourbon, to the delight of Dr. Swallow's Prohibitionists. Near where the warship was launched in Virginia a man was sentenced to one minute in jail for perjury, and a District of Columbia judge spoke a good word for the economies of lynching.

In the Wild West, irritated citizens of San Jose, California, swore they were sick and tired of having their town's name applied to a fruit scale for which Tasmania was to blame; dog owners in Seattle found their streets unsafe for their koodles when so many tenderfoot Klondikers were passing through. Buffalo Bill said thirty thousand Indians could take Havana by storm; twentyfour, including co-eds, were graduated from Carlisle Institute while their orchestra played the "Second Hungarian Rhapsody."

Brann the Iconoclast, although treacherously shot in the back, killed his opponent on a Waco sidewalk and so passed to glory Texas style; in England Mr. Gladstone prepared to die with the dignity one would presume of a great former Prime Minister. Russia rumbled threats at a China of which Julian Ralph said in *Harper's*, "Heaven speed its dividing up!" Those "Frenchmen of the Orient," the Japanese, fastidiously stripped to the waist before wading in among unarmed Chinese with swords. Five crack British brigades were stopped cold for six months in the Khyber Pass by a wild lot of heathen who produced butter from sheep's tails, but most startling of any foreign intelligence was the determination vowed by the Cubans to fight us, of all the earth's kind people, if we invaded their land without first recognizing its freedom.

New York saw the beginning of a "reservoir of literature and learning" at Fifth Avenue and Fortysecond Street to replace an old one which had contained plain water; the Brooklyn baseball club made ten errors in losing to a bush-league Lancaster, Pee-Aye, team, 13-3.

The Phillies to a man, however, signed a teetotal pledge in hope of a glorious resurrection of baseball fortune, the *Public Ledger* said, while howls from "Pro Bono Publico" and "Irate Taxpayer" peppered its editors on subjects ranging from noisy ash

collection to the "critical condition" of the Philadelphia water supply. A total stranger entered the home of Mrs. Sarah Barncoff at 2228 Freedley Street and cut off her nose, saying it was too long; newspaper fashion advisers cautioned all ladies with big feet for goodness' sake not to decorate their shoes with "jeweled butterflies and bugs."

Almost anywhere, comics warned one another, "Don't spit—remember the Johnstown flood," but saliva failed to trouble Miss Katherine Osborn of New Haven, a virtuosa who could whistle like the dickens.

Near a Florida "city of derelict wooden houses drifting in an ocean of sand," an army camp of 250 acres, partly owned by local Congressman Sparkman, was established north of the Tampa outskirts; in Cuba, Spanish officers worried over the "semiofficial plans" of American attack in a war yet undeclared, considerably published for them two months earlier by the *New York Herald*.

Congressional tempers flared over the issue of intervening in Cuba without recognition of its independence; the word "liar" was passed and books and punches were thrown. Someone even fired a pistol through the White House corridors uncaught. However, on Monday, April 24, Congress proclaimed a state of war between the United States and Spain, although one of Mr. Roosevelt's gunboats had captured a vessel with the inept name of *Buena Ventura* two days before. On that same Monday the Secretary of State resigned, ostensibly because of his senile belief that war was unnecessary.

Other notables, including ex-Presidents Cleveland and Harrison, Drs. Eliot of Harvard and Jordan of Stanford, Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, Andrew Carnegie, and Charles Francis Adams, later were to point out that we went to war after the Spanish Queen Regent had conceded every point the American ambassador had raised.

However, the guns of Sampson's fleet opened on the earthworks of Matanzas, producing "a wonderfully beneficial effect on the stock market," and killing a mule, the Spanish defender was supposed to have said. And the Professor, late of McGovern's beer

mill and of the Arch Street flophouses, moldered peacefully as Warren Spangler got his chance to report a war and Caleb Hawkins to fight in one.

viii

The Assistant Secretary of the Navy had a picture of the *Olympia* on the wall of his office, Caleb noticed as he laid his gloves on Mr. Roosevelt's desk. He had read about Commodore Dewey's flagship, now perhaps lost in the Manila Bay battle, for the A.P. had quoted "London sources" which said two ships and five hundred of our men had gone down. Trim and white in the photograph, *Olympia* yet was fearsome; its shore-bound admirer was rugged and brown and had a way of scanning visitors which suggested that if he'd had a tail he'd be switching it, Caleb thought.

Mr. Roosevelt rested a fist on the letter of introduction Caleb had sent in.

"I should like to accommodate you and, of course, my friend Mr. Wanamaker, but the roster for K Troop is filled. We easterners shall be sworn in today, as a matter of fact."

He tapped his calendar pad and smiled happily. May sixth, Caleb saw, was the one hundred and twenty-sixth day of the year, and Uranus was in conjunction with the Moon, which would be full . . . as was the roster of K Troop, First Volunteer Cavalry.

"But I must be accepted!" the young man said, leaning forward. "I came when I could. There were affairs to set in order—with my family and at the law school. I can not return to Philadelphia and tell anyone I was too late!"

Mr. Roosevelt stared at him for a moment and then asked, "Why not?"

Caleb's lips tightened stubbornly. . . . His father, for one why-not; George Fox Hawkins's pink face had set into lines few persons other than his son ever had seen when the worldling had idly spoken of going to Washington to join the Rough Riders. Caleb had been making talk and had not expected to be taken seriously,

but his father, as usual, bit hard. George Fox had quoted his namesake and several Scriptures bearing on the insanity of the sword, Caleb had resented instruction as ever, and once again there'd been a family dingdong, with the old man stumping off before he fell into the error of angry shouting. Throughout the idiotic scene, which for the life of him Caleb could not understand any better than a dozen others, his mother had wept and repeated over and over, "Caleb, Caleb, thy light flickers low." Then when the dean at the Law School had attempted to suggest he be sure he knew what he was about, Caleb had told him where to go, too, but as for himself he was going to Cuba! . . . In a manner of speaking, young Mr. Hawkins had gotten a whim in trouble and felt honor-bound to marry it.

"I fear my reasons would bore you, Mr. Secretary," Caleb said, "but they are final. I must go with you to San Antonio when you leave."

Mr. Roosevelt showed his sugar-cube teeth again, in what might or might not have been a smile, and said, "Tell me, why are you indispensable?"

"I read that you want every Rough Rider——"

"Volunteer trooper."

"Pardon me—to be capable of living as if the sky were the only ceiling he'd ever known. Very well, I can—riding and shooting have been a passion with me."

"Shooting?" said Mr. Roosevelt, pointing a stubby finger at his visitor's glasses.

"Yes. You also wear spectacles," the young man said stiffly, "yet I have heard you shoot well too."

The man called "a literary politician" touched his finger tips together, looked out the window, and murmured, "Rides like a centaur, shoots like Orion, and can subsist as rudely as a nester."

"I challenge proof! I resent being judged without demonstration!"

Mr. Roosevelt still seemed to find the view out the window interesting. He spoke as if to himself.

"Feeling that one has to prove oneself is young, normal, and American. I sat in this chair as war grew upon us and vowed I should not chafe my heart out here when others were going to the front. . . . There is no triumph of peace quite so great as the supreme triumphs of war. Any man with red blood in his veins——"

A man came in, bent toward the Assistant Secretary, and said, "General Corbin and a group of the Congress will be here soon for your induction, sir."

"Yes, yes, I shall be ready."

The man went out, and Mr. Roosevelt swiveled to glance at the letter on his desk. "I observe that Mr. Wanamaker says you are an athlete. What are your interests?"

"I box, and also learned fencing with the saber. As a swordsman I broke no records, but I did become the middleweight champion of the varsity. If I sound boastful, I mean only to be informative."

Mr. Roosevelt chuckled. "I fought too, at Harvard—bare-knuckled. . . . Well, let's see—I should say that you fulfill every requirement for a trooper of the First Volunteers but one."

"A vacancy in K Troop," Caleb said bitterly.

The frock-coated Assistant Secretary suddenly roared and stabbed at him with a forefinger.

"No! No rules or limits apply to our Mr. Hawkins because he is a special creation!"

"I beg your pardon?"

"Mis-ter Hawkins, has it ever occurred to you that the gracious little word 'sir' is customary when you address your seniors?"

"Sir, I——"

"Think about it. One gains respect by showing respect—there is a hint with which to begin your ruminations. . . . No, Mr. Hawkins, I shall forward your application to Colonel Wood without either recommendation or approval."

The Assistant Secretary rose. Caleb also got up, temporarily stunned, his head humming the way it once had when a hunter had thrown him at a Rose Tree steeplechase. . . . He never for an instant had expected . . .

Mr. Roosevelt held out his hand. "I am a direct man too," he

said, giving Caleb a hard grip, "but you must learn some humility before charging hell-for-leather at what you want. Perhaps you will learn—that is up to you. Good day, sir!"

Caleb found the street without knowing how and dragged his feet back to the hotel he had left scarcely an hour before. Then he had been a Somebody with neat gloves on his hands and an appointment with honor; now he felt so stupefied he was unaware of being barehanded. His rejection had come as such a surprise that he had not yet had time to become angry. . . .

That afternoon in an army dispensary of the District a contingent of fops, athletes, stockbrokers, and three New York policemen were sworn into the Army of the United States. Their new lieutenant colonel told them after the ceremony, "Absolute obedience to every command is your first lesson," and they gave the ex-Assistant Secretary of the Navy "a rousing cheer, and three times three more rousing cheers." By Sunday night every recruit for Troop K, First U. S. V. Cavalry, had boarded trains for Texas, where sergeants would greet them after their curious fashions.

So, too, would Caleb Parrish Hawkins, birthright Quaker, who stripped down to a pair of alligator bags and a steamer trunk before buying a one-way ticket to San Antonio. If Caleb still had lessons to learn about military simplicity, his luggage at least did not include the gentleman's gloves he had left, along with a large chunk of cockiness, on Theodore Roosevelt's desk.

On May sixth, when Caleb was strolling confidently toward the Navy Building in Washington, Susan Brecht began her first day as a timekeeper in the Frankford Arsenal and was raised to twelve dollars a week. To celebrate and improve her prosperity she had ordered in advance a set of Chambers's Encyclopedia from Lippincott's Book Store, for her pride in rising in the world was fierce. It was of no consequence that she would be transferred to the night shift which the war had forced, nor that an Arsenal might be a dangerous place. . . . Anyhow, the Delaware had been mined against the Spanish fleet, and that old Cervera, or Whatsisname, couldn't get up to Frankford Creek—could he?

Besides, there were more important matters to concern a person. Pretty soon winter's lace curtains would have to come down, be soaked in the tin wash boiler, be stretched and put away, and dark green shades hung in their places. Carpets would be untacked, beaten in the back yard, and rattan matting laid instead. The pot-bound ferns needed attention, and she also planned a pansy window box. But before such a frivolity could be justified the house must get a scrubbing from top to bottom and the cellar a white-washing. Van Sciver's was offering a three-piece oaken bedroom set for only seventeen-fifty—maybe we can manage that—and the bathroom did so need paint, and some reorganization, according to the clipping out of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, "The Washstand as a Thing of Beauty." Dearodear, a person would also have to overhaul her crash skirts and shirtwaists, what with Decoration Day just ahead. Summer was a-coming in, a Philadelphia summer, and the war would not affect that in the slightest—would it?

Also there was Warren to think about—oh, he was so nice, and they were such close friends. Wouldn't he be surprised that she and Hattie Bomberger had organized a club for summer outings among Their Crowd, with a dollar fee to keep it select. What jolly times they'd have! Trolley parties to Willow Grove to ride the chutes, boat rides down-river past pretty Marcus Hook and dancing to "Sweet Marie" in the moonlight coming back— Oh darn! She'd forgotten the torpedoes in the Delaware—but anyhow, there were no mines under Lemon Hill in Fairmount Park to blow up box-lunch picnics. Thank heaven for the Quaker love of green space; our Park and the Vienna Woods, they say, are unique among the cities of the earth. Warren would love picnicking with Their Crowd—wouldn't he?

But he was often so queer about parties; it wasn't that he was long-faced or she too gay, exactly, but he sometimes looked at Hattie Bomberger as if he were trying to pick out the softest place to pinch, or worse. Well, goodnessake, maybe Hattie did giggle a lot, but wasn't that better than sitting around with a blank look and saying things which Susan was sure were vaguely disreputable without knowing why she was sure. Now take that busi-

ness with Jimmy Johnson, who was really very sweet and who made no bones about saying he thought Warren was "gorgeous, simply gorgeous." When Jimmy had exclaimed about the fascinating feel of Honey and Almond Cream, the gorgeous big horse had pulled his darned old solemn look and said, "Uh-huh. By the way, Jimmy, how do you stand on silk shimmies for a gentleman? Are they nice?"

Even when he didn't poke fun at some of her friends he seldom got chummy; he said he didn't go for hunting entertainment in packs. That might be all wellangood for a man to say, but a bachelor girl was expected to run with a set, no matter how "vulpine" it seemed to Warren Spangler. Vulpine—such cultivated words he used when he wanted to—she could have shaken him for not showing himself off when they were in company. My goodness, when a girl had such a handsome, manly fella on the string, who was bright too, and she could see the other girls eying him like a fur coat, you'd think he'd seize opportunities to make her proud. But no, Warren would sit back and watch far less talented fellas cut up and listen to them talk, with his face fixed in one of those Looks. Why, he didn't even act possessive! She had a mind to . . .

No, she'd better not. A girl could not be forward; the man has to be the first to say, "I love you" and things like that, as any book of manners would tell you. And he did make her feel wanted sometimes when they were alone; you could see it in his eyes and feel it like a current in the touch of his hand. . . . Susan's skin prickled as she remembered Wednesday night, and she darted a glance about to see if Mr. Dungan, the foreman, or any of the girls had seen her blush.

Ma had gone to bed, and they were sitting at cassino.

"Susie," Warren had said, "Susie, I don't make much of the job of being a beau, do I? . . . Hey, you can't take a ten and a three with a queen!"

"Why, Warren Spangler, whatever made you say a thing like that?"

"Well, for one thing, I can't play a mandolin, and for another,

I don't roach my hair. You've hinted you'd like me more dandified, too."

"I'm sure I don't care what you do."

Then he had grinned his exasperating grin. "Tsk-tsk. Let's be calm."

"'Beau,' indeed! Why, you haven't even——"

He'd cocked his head, but she decided not to finish her sentence. Both put down their cards and waited on the other.

"Yes, well," he'd finally said, "let's stop pretending, Susie. I'm very fond of you, but you like to call the rules of the game of hearts."

"You're talking words, Mr. Spangler," she had said, just as haughtily as all get out.

"I'll try to be plain. Will you make an effort not to interpose last month's Women's Advice from the *Home Journal*?"

"Why do you have it in for the magazines I read? Leslie's and the *Journal* are high-class, and——"

"Oh, high-class, absolutely," he had said, with one of those Looks, "but I can't think in *Journal* terms when I want to talk of you and me."

That's what he had said: "you and me."

"Oh?"

"No."

"Well, begin," she'd said, folding her hands. "Begin. I'm listening."

"Why do you think I've been hauling 'way up here all these weeks—because I like the Fifth Street line?"

"No, but you like my mother and Gus."

"Oh joy," he had sighed, "more games. Can't you hold still and answer straight questions straightly? You know darned tooting I come only to see you!"

"Chee, t'anks."

Warren had laughed. "Susie, I like you best when you don't worry about being a 'lydy' and are being yourself. I love th——"

"Oh, so now I'm not a lady, am I?"

"Who said so? I said——"

"Please let it pass. You would know so much better about who is and who isn't!"

He had taken her hands. "I'm not sold on ladies, Susan. Too many are pleats-and-bows ladies only. I'm spoiled by having known real ones—my mother, and women like Richard Harding Davis's mother—who make the Mrs. Grundys and Mrs. Astorbilts seem pretty pallid, stupid females. I want a clear-eyed woman with as few bigotries and shams as may be. You are one and don't even know it—I wish I could be as sure about myself. You're lovely and sweet and confused, and I——"

He had begun to make love talk, do you see? And, just like him, went about it in a way to set your teeth on edge; it was all she could do to refrain from walloping him, although she wanted to fall into his arms too. But then what had to happen, right at the critical moment, tantalizingly short of three little words, but that mortifying business with Peteykins!

The canary had been drowsing on the curtain pole, beguiled by the murmuring and by being up late, no doubt, but he had stretched a wing with a luxurious yawn and then flown to "The Horse Fair" just as Warren had reached a most interesting part of his speech. Susan knew what the bird intended and hoped her caller would not notice, but how could he help noticing when the picture fell down? Many tiltings to clean behind it must have weakened the wire, or something; anyhow, fall it did, and so did that week's accumulations from Peteykins's visits.

Susan had hurried to cover the dreadful mess, but Warren had asked, "Anything I can do? What's all that?" right over her shoulder. Oh, that man, that Johnny-on-the-spot, that——

"If you must know everything, Mr. Nosy, I'm cleaning up Peteykins's bathroom!"

Now what was guano, and why did the canary's use of Miss Rosa Bonheur's beautiful picture tickle the man? Well, FRID-HUMA—Volume Five in her new Chambers—would tell about guano, she'd said, but the mention of Chambers had set the vulgarian to snickering again.

He had not returned to the subject of love and ladies, thanks

to guano, but he asked if she expected a vacation during the summer.

"The war may make a difference, but I don't know. Why?"

"I'd like to take you to Lancaster. It's a nice old town, and you'd like my dad and mother. Anyhow, think about it, will you? Good night, darling."

And he had caught her astonishingly close and had kissed her for keeps before he trotted down the front steps whistling "Don't Be Cross."

. . . Susan felt herself blushing again when her memory reached its end, and she dropped a flutter of timecards to the floor.

"Got the dropsy, Miss Brecht?" Mr. Dungan said as he passed.

"No, sir."

. . . How ever had she wondered whether Warren could stir her? And how had he been able to withhold that exciting talent for kissing? She wasn't a seasoned judge, but by the wisdom of the flesh Susan knew quality when she experienced it. . . . Horrors!—was it possible he had practiced? Gus had said, "The sport of love wants learning too, the same as fiddle playing"—who had taught Warren to fiddle? He never had hinted.

Susan Brecht, she told herself firmly, I think you are in love and had better admit it. That's what Warren meant about "playing hearts," that's what! Drat the *Home Journal*—he'll get his straight answer straightly just as soon as he asks the straight question!

Warren Spangler floated out of Clarke Davis's office holding one of the Big Boss's cigars as Oscar Wilde might have fingered a lily. None of the clerks in the managing editor's vicinity paid attention to the cigar and miraculous levitation until Warren bumped against a female typewriter's desk. She was a plain young woman who smelled of pepsin gum, and she looked up curiously at his balmy face.

"Did you hurt yourself?" she asked.

"Hey?"

"You gave yourself a clout on the corner of my desk, Mr. Spangler. Golly, didn't you notice?"

"I'm sorry. Did it mar the finish?"

Good Lord, these reporters, she thought—but she smiled to show teeth which she knew were excellent, but he only stared at them blankly and said:

"What time is it?"

"Ten-forty."

"What day?"

"Friday."

"Date, month, and year?"

"Go roll your hoop!"

"No, no. I want to impress myself. Please——"

"May sixth, '98. Now, why?"

"And this is the general office of the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*—motto: 'Virtue, Liberty, and Independence?'"

"Do you feel good?"

"Who am I?"

"Little Tommy Tucker. Go chase yourself—I'm busy, or should be."

He bent over and kissed her with a loud smack. "God bless us all, every one, cried Tiny Tim," Warren said, "and bless you, princess, for restoring me to sanity."

Wheeling like a mechanical soldier, he strode off. The flustered typewriter worked a rat back into place in her hair with shaking fingers and tugged down her blouse. To her fellow workers she said:

"Imagine, he said 'sanity'!"

In the City Room Warren gave Tweed a goose and Picklepuss the complimentary cigar. Eventually, when everyone had heard the good news, he telephoned the drugstore to leave a message for Susan, which caused stormy weeping, and composed a telegram for Lancaster which read:

DEAR FOLKS: WILL RAP DOOR TOMORROW, STAYING FOR DAY ONLY. MUST RETURN SUNDAY FOR PRESSING ENGAGEMENT WITH TRAIN FOR TAMPA. SING HEY NONNY NONNY AND A CUBA LIBRE. WARREN.

PART II

Spring: Tampa

If you see it in the Sun, it's so.

—The New York Sun.

If you see it in the Sun, you're lucky.

—The New York Journal.

We don't know a thing—and doubt if anyone else does.

—The Tampa Times.

Mr. Henry Bradley Plant was a lifelong invalid of seventynine when the Army moved into his hotel; Colonel Randolph Speer Evers had reached sixtythree, his invalidism having been arrested, he said, by Echo Springs Sour Mash Whisky and the equable climate of Florida. Colonel Evers was a Tampan, but Mr. Plant was Tampa. Neither had begun life so; the colonel was a Virginian and the magnate a Nutmegger, but this kind of circumstance is normal among Floridians. Both wore the white mustaches, black slouch hats, and string ties so often associated with Ol' Massa, and bowed to each other on the street occasionally.

However, where Mr. Plant of Connecticut had achieved intimacy with Jefferson Davis, the colonel's nearest association with a Yankee had been over the sights of a rifle. Besides his mammoth hotel Mr. Plant possessed a railroad, a steamship line, and money by the satchel; Colonel Evers had a rusty orange grove, two women in his family, and a nightmare.

Damyankees had not burned him out of Richmond. Those fires had been set by drunken local whoresons in April of '65, but the house of his fathers still crashed into its cellar during the colonel's sleep. Appomattox, and that whoosh of sparks, and the knowledge that his son was a cinder somewhere amid the coals had ended the importance of living for Speer Evers, but though an era died, his body and cough survived. His father-in-law installed him in Florida on profits made by trading with the enemy during the War Be-

tween the States, but Speer had become indifferent even to the source of his capital. He built a house on Hillsborough Bay with a view of some palmettos on a tidal flat, and with total abstraction watched the water, the mosses, and the summer storms from its windows as the years wheeled on.

He consecrated a room to the little boy who tried to save his cat from burning; its furnishings, except for a few scurfy toys remaining from the sixties, were what Philip's parents believed their dead son would have chosen if he had grown up, and above the doorway the colonel cut lines adapted from classic epitaph:

*Randolph Speer, the Father, laid Here the seven
years old Child, his High Hope, Philip.*

No one used The Boy's room, and alcohol and time eventually persuaded Speer that the shrine was empty; but Genevieve Evers maintained it still, because she was ceremonious as naturally as a leaf grows green or a dog draws fleas.

Speer Evers was not really a colonel. He had been a captain of Confederate cavalry on sick leave when General Weitzel's blue-coats had marched into burning Richmond, but his wife later gave Speer his promotion, "because anybody knew he would have been at least a colonel if the rest of the South hadn't left Virginia to carry on a war they'd lost." Speer accepted the brevet without argument, devoting his energies to bourbon whisky and a literary effort which had mounted to nine foolscap volumes by May of 1898. *Memories of Genl. Lee and Others* was his Penelopean web; no end was in sight nor publication planned, but the colonel took the precautions dear to diarists. He wrote all coarser words, for instance, in capital Greek letters: Lincoln was a ΝΙΤΤΕΡ ΠΙΜΠ, Grant a ΒΑΣΤΑΡΑ, Sheridan a ΤΥΡΑ, and so on. Plain talk about his wife's family he kept under a loose board in the attic.

Genevieve seldom saw him, because Speer withdrew to the attic when she opened fire, which usually was on sight. In his "tow'ah den" he wrote, and frequently slept too, since Genevieve could not abide the aroma of Echo Springs Sour Mash nor the Sen-Sen which he thought purified his breath.

The tower literally was Speer's den, for he showed his rickety teeth if it were invaded. Generally, however, he was undisturbed there, with his desk, couch, lamp, and an oil painting of Genl. Lee done from the Arlington Brady photograph by a maiden aunt who also painted lifelike wax fruit. Only on the lower floors did his wife harry him, since futility of utterance never stopped Genevieve when she desired to utter. As a member of the Anti-Saloon League and of the Methodist Church (South) militant, Speer was her crown of thorns; if she could not win him to the Fountain that never runs dry, she was not going to let him go to hell relaxed. To avoid her jawing the colonel fled upstairs, to add new paragraphs to *Genl. Lee and Others* and think on the days when towers had portcullises and moats.

Mrs. Evers harangued their daughter too.

"After two years of widow's weeds you ought to be married again, because that's Nature and-a one year is long enough to mourn socially, although between us there's no use pretending you were heartbroken over Howard Joe, for you weren't and we know you weren't, so-a you better just leave off combing your hair and dilly-dallying, because when a woman is thirtythree she hasn't a minute to squander unless she wants to dry up and blow away. . . . Are you paying mind to me, Rowena Evers?"

To the Saxons, Rowena meant "white mane," and her name fitted her bloneness as her mother scarcely could have hoped when she selected it from *Ivanhoe*. Her father had been weeping when she was conceived and was drunk when she was born, and because she was a quiet child who kept out of his sight, there had been days when he came to with a start and wondered who she was. Rowena grew tall, and her sea-green eyes and provocative walk set other men wondering too; watching her undulate across a floor suggested harem fountains, transparent black silk, and the scent of aloes on the night, but in reality her mind was the only Saharan thing about Rowena.

She was a placid puss, now about ready to ignore parental advice as unconcernedly as once she had listened. Ten years before, Genevieve had married her off without ruffling her daughter's calm,

choosing one Howard Joe Bates, a substantial, if aging, widower. But the assets of Bates & Co., Importers, were partitioned during the Panic of '93, nor had Howard Joe managed the business of living with his mother-in-law any better. He took up fishing in self-defense, but one blistering summer afternoon, after sitting bare-headed for hours on a pier, he discovered a better defense. A *cigarro* who had been dozing near by swore that Señor Bates had broken his pole over his knees, flung his bait can into the bay and himself after it, shouting he would swim to *Nueva Orleans*. This was discounted as a piece of Cuban frivolity.

Howard Joe washed up near Catfish Point some days later, the authorities courteously closed their books on an accidental drowning, Rowena went into stunning black, and Mrs. Evers enjoyed the first few months of mourning better than small boys like to sharpen new pencils. Only the colonel grieved, for he had understood his son-in-law, but since Speer's eyes normally watered quite a bit, he did not get credit for his emotion.

When the juice had been wrung from crape and condolences, Genevieve was astounded to hear that her daughter was in no scorching hurry to marry again.

"I want to get a hold on myself," Rowena had said.

"Hold? Hold? What nonsense is that?"

"Just a hold," came the answer, nor could the young woman be moved by abuse or tears to add more than, "Howard Joe was a nice old codger, but not my idea. I'll take my own counsel next time."

Nothing but shame could come of such naked rebellion, yet Genevieve discovered that her once easygoing child would not be shaken. As candidly as a mother can, Genevieve attacked her daughter's incapacity to choose for herself, and her lack of solid personal attractions. Rowena fooled with a mandolin, could stitch appliqué on anything, and made a great hoopla of hairbrushing. The vain thing had no other beguilements unless you counted an ability to plug the eye out of a squirrel at ninety feet—a talent you could guarantee was useless, coming from her father.

"Lazy, that's what you are, just satisfied to sit around and fill up

hair jars! You could study genealogy, or take up with the Daughters of the Confederacy, or broaden your mind with W.C.T.U. work, as I did, but no—no, I don't understand you, Rowena, I vow, because in my day a woman who was widowed through no fault of her own was actually more desirable because she'd been through the mill, so to say, because-a she'd learned about a household and-a how to manage niggers and arrange flowers, and-a how to please a man in all sorts of ways besides just You-Know-What—even if she couldn't bring a dowry from the first husband to the next, which I know is a drawback in our case, but-a you're a fine figure of a woman in spite of being thirtythree, so-a if you'd set after a well-fixed man of good family nobody could say you nay—but this peculiar attitude of yours will drive me to my grave, it's getting so like that man's in the tower it is, I swear, and-a . . .”

So on, but Rowena would answer, “Now, now,” and flow away with her hips making sinuous music, or would go on brushing her long hair with a smile for its gleam in the mirror.

Lately she had gone more often for a drive in the family democrat, a pink parasol over her and a look of alert vacuity in her eyes. The United States had declared war on Spain and deposited soldiers in Tampa to send Rowena a wide selection of husbands, had her mother known; the Tampa Bay Hotel was full of dashing men from everywhere, anywhere but Tampa. Unfortunately nine tenths were Yankee, but there you were—so was the glamorous North Yankee, with its shops and theaters and fashionable places to be seen in. Women, she had read, were exposing their shoulders at the opera, and Rowena knew that herself bare—as far as gentility did strip—was a sight worth seeing. She felt that she owed herself to more of the world than Tampa.

One Tuesday in May she paced her carriage about the long perimeter of the hotel to watch heads turn and then set off for the Port. A bon-voyage mob entangled her democrat there, a sway-backed side-wheel steamer being the object of the crowd's attention. The boat's whistle frightened her horse, who bucked as if he thought the ship was threatening to come after him, walking beam, smoke, whistle and all.

A young man with a lock of black hair in his eyes soothed the horse with knowing hands. He was a tall, wide-shouldered fellow with a manner Rowena liked, so she smiled and said:

"I'm deeply grateful, suh. May I return your favor by offering you a ride back into the town?"

. . . *Noblesse oblige*, as Papa would say, even though the young man was wearing a ridiculous flannel shirt. One owed him thanks, and besides, he was quite handsome for a Yankee.

The Tampa Bay Hotel socked it to Warren from the first. Rocking chairs! Stretched out a mile, and full of a sitting Standing Army! An intuition told him that by the way they rocked and talked these officers of the Army were both worried and bored. They mumbled and grouched, perspiring plentifully in woolen choker collars under the Moorish arches.

He was eager to get to work—the train had been tedious, but he had been too full of anticipations to sleep—and at the desk when he registered he inquired for Richard Harding Davis, for whom he had a letter from Clarke Davis.

"I reckon he's down at Port Tampa seeing the Gussie off," the room clerk said around a toothpick. "She's fixing to take guns to the Cubians. Highly secret, the paper says. You a reporter too, suh?"

Once unpacked, Warren shed his Philadelphia clothes for an outfit Jacob Reed & Co. had said was what the well-dressed war correspondent should wear. Before an hour was out the flannel shirt and the laced boots irked him much more than they had the window dummy, but Warren forgot to complain months later when the day and chance arrived. Many other damnable things made him forget.

He did not find R. H. D. that first exciting day, but find the Gussie he did. Gussie was an antique lady who for years had wet her bottom in fresh waters, but neither her age nor her peaceful career were going to deter Gussie from a fling at salty adventure. Painted a gaudy red except for green shutters, she seemed to be as contemptuous of the bullets of Spain as a Baptist preacher might be of the opinions of Bob Ingersoll. A crowd of the highborn and

the low, all familiar with her date with mystery, were at the wharf to see her go. The low scratched themselves, cracked peanuts and jokes, and broke into jigs and laughter; the wearers of panamas and dotted swiss sipped iced tea and jockeyed to fall in step with quality one degree higher than themselves. Little boys fell off the pier and were fished out of the bath-warm water; little girls played hide-and-seek, shrieking like blackbirds; Gibson girls said oh-pshaw when their skirts picked up splinters from the planking; dandies in straw skimmers twirled their mustaches and studied to look rakehell. Dogs fought, babies cried, cornets blew, fish gurry stunk, and gulls and pelicans stopped in to see what was going on.

People threw cakes to the tanned regulars leaning over Gussie's rail and called out encouragements. An old fellow in a carefully patched Confederate uniform shook his blackthorn stick toward Cuba and yelled:

"Knock seven bells out of them, lads! Yip-yip-yip-e-e!"

Warren grinned, thinking how nice for an old grayback to give the yell of '61 for the bluecoats, and half wondering if the old man himself was conscious of being picturesque. He said as much to a young man sitting on a piling.

The man was lean, of middling height, carelessly dressed, and rather broody-looking, but Warren liked his clean-cut nose and the intense blue eyes above it. When he spoke, his accent was northern.

"Uh-huh. One big happy country," the man said. "The pelicans have been reconstructed and the gulls are American too."

Warren stared at him. He had judged from the ragged condition of the young man's mustache that he might hear a comment useful for "color," but you couldn't use sardonics in wartime.

"Well," Warren said a trifle uncomfortably, "will the Gussie's people do what they're out to do?"

"Don't know. Do you?"

"I—do you think they'll find Garcia?"

"Maybe. They'll surely bump into Spaniards, though, because that's not what they're after."

"How so?"

"They're guarding and delivering an arms shipment, not hunting a fight. I thought everyone knew that. It's been extremely confidential—they boarded in the dead of night, too, or hadn't you gotten your morning paper?"

"No, I didn't know that."

"Now you do. You can report it to Madrid."

Warren laughed. "Do I look like a spy? I'm just a Philadelphia reporter who——" He stopped. Who was interviewing whom here? . . .

The hawk's eyes over the chiseled nose pinned him. "A likely story. I believe you're from Moose Jaw."

"Nope. Nor from Medicine Hat, either. What the——"

"Damn, and I so wanted to catch a spy myself," the young man said. "They collared one here from Moose Jaw recently. Swore he was innocent, of course, but—Moose Jaw! Well!"

"Maybe he was from Moo—— Never mind." Warren felt pleasantly giddy. "Anyhow, all these people here could be spies. This junket has been publicized enough."

The young man spat into the sparkling bay.

"You could be one, Gonzalez!" Warren added.

"Sí, sí."

They both grinned, and the man with the moth-eaten mustache said, "What paper did you say?"

"I didn't say, but it's the *Public Ledger*. My name's Spangler."

"Damngood paper. How's old—— Oh, hey! Hey, Bonsal! Archibald!"

A party of civilians were boarding the ship, some wearing solar topees, one or two carrying drawing boards, all bearing themselves with casual purpose. Reporters and sketch artists, Warren realized when he took up mental slack. Bonsal was the man who had been all over hell and Siam; Archibald, Archibald—no, that name escaped Warren; but the heavy-set fellow with the boater, wasn't he the famous Frederic Remington?

"See you," said the hawk-eyed man, going away.

He skipped agilely through the crowd toward the gangplank. A strange hairpin, Warren mumbled, but he envied his acquaintance

with the greats of newspaperdom and briefly wondered if he, too, was one.

A dark-skinned little man at his elbow suddenly erupted and shook a Cuban flag. "*Viva los soldados americanos! Viva los Estados Unidos! Viva Cuba! Vi-i-va-a!*"

As if it were a prearranged signal, Gussie answered with a whistle blast and everybody viva-ed and whoopee-ed. The ship's ropes were cast off and the old girl paddled slowly away from the dock like a fat red duck. Hats and handkerchiefs went crazy, a knot of school-girls on the brink of tears sang "Onward, Christian Soldiers," the wailing babies redoubled their efforts to outdo Gussie's hooting, and most of the departing First Infantry looked embarrassed. Behind Warren a horse snorted his intention of leaving the pandemonium.

Warren's reflexes, conditioned by years of cultivating police horses, made him reach into a pocket for an apple. Recollecting, he caught the curb rein and stroked the horse's nose to assure him that a man could protect him from a steamboat any day.

He told the driver, "If you wait till the crowd thins out he'll be all right. I'll stick around to steady him if you want."

Rowena said, "I'm deeply grateful, suh. May I return your favor by offering you a ride back into the town?"

"D-dandy," Warren said, and grinned. "That'll save four bits on the swindle sheet, and the company—y-yours, I mean—will be—uh—s-select."

. . . Rowena, did he hear it right—Rowena Bates? Now if that little red tub with the green shutters had to have a feminine name for martial endeavor, why had it to be Gussie? Gussie was a dirty face and pigtails—why not Rowena, far more stately to launch one of a thousand ships and burn the topless towers of . . .

Oh yes, Miss Bates, the Tampa Bay Hotel. . . . No, just arrived—Philadelphia. . . . Yes, there's some nice country around there, but Florida looks interesting too. . . . Is it always just nicely warm like this? . . .

x

(Extracts from Warren Spangler's notebook and from an article sent to his newspaper.)

I'll bet this is the damndest war that ever was! Gilbert and Sullivan could do an operetta on it easily.

General Wade is back in command. Nothing unusual on the face of that except that it was unintentional—he was “inadvertently” promoted over the head of Shafter! To further complicate matters, a wispy Santa Claus named Wheeler has turned up, also with the stars of a major general; he is the man who took over Jeb Stuart's Rebel cavalry when Sheridan killed Jeb in '64. So now while the War Department gnaws its problem of button, button, who's the commanding general, the C.G.s and their staffs clank about in the corridors trying to ignore one another and bowing correctly when mutual myopia just won't wash. (Later: just heard Shafter again is top dog as of yesterday. Wade's going to Chickamauga.)

Tampa is a funneled fish trap. No living soul once arrived ever will get out. Guns, crates, mules have clogged the dinky railroads as far north as Columbia, S.C., but somehow soldiers keep coming in to begin drilling under a scorching sun. Nobody tells them where to bivouac; they arrive and wander about until they find a spot in the scrub to light. Delivered like freight by carriers who owe no responsibility to the Army over any other consignor, they are scattered over miles of pine barrens, shoeless, unarmed, tentless, hungry, and damning the bugs and wishing they were generals or dead. . . .

God! Dewey didn't lose a solitary man or ship at Manila! The official word just came through. Imagine—he broke off the fight three hours for breakfast and returned to the pigeon shoot with a full stomach and clean guns. Those foreign reports of our hundreds of casualties in an “inconclusive engagement” must have

been wishful thinking on Europe's part. . . . Except for England and Holland, they all hate us—Susie writes that Philadelphia women have formed a boycott of Paris styles to pay off the French for offensive sympathy with Spain. . . .

(Tampa, May 21—Special to the Public Ledger): While the Navy is swatting the Dons by sea the Army is slapping mosquitoes. . . . Troops bulge Tampa's seams; before April there could not have been more than 8,000 people in the city, black, white, and brindle, but now it is an anthill of regulars from Plains stations and volunteers from everywhere. Confusion marks their arrival. . . .

A tropic sun wallops Tampa with no poetic pretense of "kissing." Houses are ramshackle, and the few which once may have boasted paint have had it tortured off by sun and sand. As one of the soldiers puts it, "Every now and then the next county blows by—then there's a hot calm, and bye-and-bye here she comes again from t'other way and Polk County goes back where she came from. Boy, how I wisht I was back at the good, old, foggy Presidio in Frisco!"

Tampa's streets are sand, although there has been talk of packing them with an aluminum clay from Bartow. They are unlighted at night, and the swamp creatures frolic; to quote the soldier, "A man feeling his way back from a ginmill in this burg stands a fair chanct of seeing real snakes and alligators!"

However, if the town itself is primitive and shabby, the Tampa Bay Hotel, where the Fifth Corps headquarters is located, is six acres of Bagdad-in-brick and stuffed with objets d'art—a "veritable wilderness" of them, its advertising circular says truthfully. We work surrounded by Japanese rose jars four feet tall, Delft porcelains, Hepplewhite chairs, Napoleon's own clock, and the jewel cabinet of Mary, Queen of Scots . . .

. . . not forgetting native American products like roaches and a dollar-sized spider who shells them daintily. The only other strictly American feature is the plumbing, for which Allah—who designed the Tampa Bay, I think—be praised. The thirteen silver minarets of our immense paynim boardinghouse jut up among palms and flowers which are Florida's glory: royal poinciana, jac-

aranda, flame vine, hibiscus—their very names flash orange, blue, and scarlet. The chameleons must have to hump to keep up with the grandeur. I wonder what happened to that curious little chameleon who climbed over my sill and ate a piece of eraser? . . .

Except old Joe Wheeler, most of the ranking pooh-bahs of the corps are roughing it here among the bronzes and leering at Venus at her Bath in Carrara marble. "Fighting Joe" prefers a tent in the scrub, with the bugs and night damps and cavalry, a choice very spirited of the old boy but not a credit to his sense at his age, R. H. Davis says. . . .

Life at the hotel has become domestic. Many correspondents' wives have joined them, and their husbands, who were at first ready to rough it, have gone back into linen suits and neckties. Campaign clothing of khakil (a British-Indian word for "mud-colored") are less on view because of the ladies who swarm. Now dinner jackets are desirable in the evening, after a desperate day at ping-pong and shuffleboard.

Another board continues to be interesting, of course: the hotel bulletin board, which reporters haunt because it gives the "predicted movements" for the Army. So far it has registered only routine shuffles of troops among Chickamauga Park, Jacksonville, Lakeland, and here, and occasionally carries an anonymous bit of foolery like:

*The government censor in Fla.
Could hardly be very much ha.
Now and then, if you hark
You will hear a remark,
Than which nothing ever was ta.*

. . . Caspar Whitney calls it a "yellow bulletin board" because its discrepancies—kind word—remind him of the *New York World* or *Boston Herald*. Still, we have no other warning against being caught with our laundry unmobilized in case of war. . . .

Susie may throw a cat fit if I mention the Widow Bates, but on the other hand she wouldn't believe me if I said I hadn't met any women. So I'll come clean in advance of a slip of the tongue later. . . . Some women can spot signs of age about one another,

like crow's-feet and crepy elbows, but I'm lucky if I can guess an age within a decade. Rowena is older than I, I think, because at times she carries a look in her eyes that was hoary when stone for the Pyramids was quarried. Man hunger—but not the careless kind. It entertains me to watch how the older men, particularly, pant after her; you can almost see their batteries recharging when she dances with them. . . .

The troops on Picnic Island and Tampa Heights play baseball with local teams and one another. In passing, one should warn that "heights" in Florida terrain are not Andean—any wart of ground ten feet above sea level will do. . . .

When I met Stephen Crane I did not know him. I still don't, but I like him, because he's vital, retiring, and unpretentious. He has a caustic tongue for pompous idiots which I admire; the other day while we were walking through the camps we overheard one of the volunteer colonels lecturing his troops on the sanctity of all constituted authority, et cetera, et cetera, his manner rather than his warmed-over philosophies being as stuffy as any assistant office manager's. Steve said, "I wrote a verse about him once.

"A man said to the universe:
'Sir, I exist!'
'However,' replied the universe,
'The fact has not created in me
A sense of obligation.'"

He's full of surprises, one minute esthetic as hell, and the next confessing he can't read this or that classic because some of them "go on and on like Texas." He cropped up yesterday with another talent; we had watched a ball game between a doughboy team and the Tampa Grays at Ballast Point and borrowed a bat and ball afterward for a pickup game—Etaoins vs. Shrdlus, of course. Crane was the only sparkle on the diamond—how should I have guessed he'd almost turned professional once?

I see little of the famous R. H. D. He's not Olympian exactly, but he keeps to old stagers in the business—Remington, Scovel, Fox, Akers of the *London Times*, and Rouse of the *N. Y.*

Times (all God's chillun got *Times-es*). In his lofty way Davis was kind to me when I presented his father's letter, and advised me on a field kit. I'm waiting before buying a horse until the traders on the Tampa Bay lawn get over their delusions that all their nags are Typhoon IIs, and I also mistrust binoculars that come from a drugstore. Some of the boys, though, will have to charter special steamers to carry their gear and souvenirs if we stay here much longer. . . .

Davis is just as handsome as Charles Dana Gibson draws him, cleft chin and all, and togs himself nobbily even in knockabouts. Aside from R. H. D. there isn't an American in town who could get away with knickers, topped off by a Homburg with a spiffy feather in the band. He carries gloves too.

But Davis at his starriest can't match the foreign attachés. Their uniforms must break the jealous hearts of every homebred Knight of Pythias. . . . The German is a towering fellow with a monocle and dueling scars and pointed beard just like a character out of cartoons, whom Crane convinced he was truly an American coolie—Steve's clothes look it—and would the count be pleased to be towed to dinner in a rickshaw? Crane dropped the shafts with a thump that jinged von Goetzen's medals when they had a last-minute "argument" over the fare, and the count threatened to cut Steve into fillets. He was restrained.

The rickshaws are not museum pieces, but are used in peacefuller times to convey elderly ladies to their meals down the long north corridor. Underfoot is a wonderful red India carpet with British royal lions figured on it in blue. Since nothing is improbable about the Tampa Bay, one believes that it belonged to Queen Victoria. . . .

Poultney Bigelow says she refused delivery of the carpeting when she reconsidered: what, should Englishmen walk on their national beast? So old Mr. Plant, that cosmic pack rat, fetched it in for his dream castle. If Vic was perturbed that Stretch Spangler might scuff the imperial cats, she also must have felt there was no sense wasting the goods, either. Any housewife could see her point. . . .

Rickshaws, royal rugs—and jasmine on the salt air which blows “sweeter than the less criminal forms of sin” into my bedroom window at night. Yet across the river you can tell at a whiff that Tampa has no sewers; a drought hangs on, so the atmosphere grows more miasmic daily. Tampans must yearn for the cool Klondike somebody named Rex Beach is writing about in a series of “bright letters” to a local paper. . . .

I get tired of squeezing the same old lemons day after day: “Hello, soldier, where are you from? . . . You don’t say! . . . Well, well, I’m from Philamaclink myself. What’s your name, unit, and home address? . . . How do you like the Army? . . . Hey, I can’t print that!” So you have to write a lot of swill about . . .

How brown and hard the troops are getting! The regulars, of course, are accustomed to the outdoors, but the volunteers also thrive on fresh air and the regimen of the bugle. New Yorkers and Philadelphians complain there are too many beans, but Bostonians are content. . . . Sankey, the evangelist, is in town. Besides tightening their muscles, many of the men are strengthening the cords of the spirit. Sickiness of any kind is rare, whether of body or soul. . . .

A soldier died of typhoid recently, which is disturbing enough, but the attitude of one reporter chilled me: “A regular, wasn’t he? Then my paper won’t consider his death newsworthy—that’s what he was paid to expect.” If, as Crane sarcastically says, newspapers are “the wisdom of the age,” ours is a callous one. There will be thousands of fatalities before long, but the impact of the first deaths is sharper—shock sickens of itself when death becomes arithmetic. No casualty is a statistic, but a man. Crane smiled when I said this and showed me a line in a book by John Donne which he thinks he’ll never finish: “Every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine.” The Maine, indeed! . . .

Rougher elements among the soldiery are indifferent to religion, but the local lodge of F. & A. Elbowbenders has a large military chapter which conducts services in places like the White Rose, “Headquarters for U. S. Regulars—See the Red, White, and Blue Lights at 213 Lafayette Street.” Inspired by this patriotic boozing,

they riot with the town police. . . . Thieves, confidence men, speak-easy operators, and punks follow armies like carrion crows, and brawling is inevitable in their train. . . .

Some of the donnybrooks are comic, others not so. Of the former kind was the shooting at what the local *Times* delicately called a "resort" kept by Alice May Somebody at Central and Polk. Alice May got a slug in the leg; Lizzie seized a drunken doughboy's revolver and shot him in the hand; Nina, a third joy-girl, locked herself in a closet to pray "to a Friend with whom she had not been on speaking terms for years." The *Times* reporter had a jocular interview with Alice May, for he asked her such questions as whether she suspected the nasty men of being "rough riders."

On the other hand, Jim Crow breeds ugly incidents, when so many of the regulars here are colored. A local blowhard got a punch in the eye he richly deserved for calling a sergeant "yellow—you damn niggers can't fight!" The Negro happened to be both sensitive and a holder of the D.S.C. Then there was a tense whoop-de-do in the Fort Brooke section when cavalrymen broke into a jail at pistol point. Led by white officers, they released a fellow trooper who had been clapped into the pokey for insisting on buying soda water—he swore it was—at a "White Only" place. I am confused and embarrassed by all this, and hate it spontaneously without knowing why, or how to answer the sweetly reasonable people who say they *like* the niggers when they keep their place. That "place" seems to be the bottom, with no real chance of rising; it's the same thing in the North, more piously concealed. As a matter of fact, the places referred to in those typically southern words, "Jim Crow" (from Tuckahoe) and "Dixie" (Dixius's land—belonging to a Hudson Valley patrol), both are a few miles north of New York City. I realize this gem of useless information only helps to cloud the air, but someday somebody smarter than I is going to have to clear it. . . .

Quiet Tampa probably never will be the same again, nor its grandiose hotel ever again see the splashy color of May 1898.

Cowboys, priests, trulls, men of all the wide earth; shouts, prayers, shots; the endless rumble of wagons, the crackling white uniforms of nurses; famous personages and criminals—all will vanish when our expedition has gone. Afterward the evenings again will become the property of the cantantes callejeros roaming up from Ybor City, plunking tunes on their guitars that the old cow died of. The bewildered citizens will watch us go with relief and, I think, regret. Regimental bands will play in the hotel rotunda no more; the grand orchestrion will regale the seasonal visitors of peacetime with tunes on its rollers instead. The ballroom surely will seem subdued, and the couplet of Heine's on a painting above the musicians' gallery may lose its carefree pertinence:

If you don't like wine, women, and song,
You'll be a boob your whole life long.

. . . Incongruous as it seems, this is wartime. . . .

I stood on the piazza with a group of officers last night during a dance. Looking in the windows at the crowded, brilliant ballroom, I remembered the soiree in Brussels that Thackeray said was held the night before Waterloo. One of our army bands was doing what it could with a waltz while the assembly whirled and swayed. There were red tunics and tailcoats, jack boots, sashes, and cummerbunds, bronze medals, silver swords, and gold braid. There were blue and pink organdies, silk slippers, opal rings and topaz necklaces, perfumes from spirits and tropical flowers. Laughing couples rose from antique pouf chairs to stroll the gardens or refresh at punch bowls, while over all the chandeliers sprinkled diamonds.

One tough old Indian fighter in our group looked in at the company through a lace curtain, set down a glass of iced tea to light a fresh cigar.

As he puffed he said, "Yes, gentlemen, as Sherman truly said—war is hell."

xi

It was a dewy June morning, but the column of troopers who dismounted behind the Tampa Bay Hotel were soiled, and free-

spoken about their condition. They had been deposited before dawn in a wilderness behind Ybor City five miles from the hotel, after a bruising trip of five eternities from Texas. Although even their horses had bags under their eyes, at least they had eaten from forage the Rough Riders had stowed in the aisles of their own coaches. Much of the gear of the men, however, including rations and mess kits, had been switched off somewhere more convenient for rattlesnakes and mockingbirds; Lieutenant Colonel Roosevelt had given the train crew hark-from-the-tomb when he had found out about the baggage, and his irritation may have sprung from self-annoyance over not having required all personal equipment kept close by every man. But, as Major Brodie said, "The colonel's a daisy, and don't you forget it," for he shared their miseries; he had relinquished his sleeping berth to a sick trooper and had sat up on the stiff seats with the others, whiling away the jolting hours by reading *La Supériorité des Anglo-Saxons*.

After picketing their horses, the men pitched tents. Trooper Hawkins of L broke out his shelter half and lashed it with his bunkie's, Trooper Bigod of Rosebud, Montana. The ground was sheeted with water, for Florida's drought had broken with a row of storms lasting a week before the Rough Riders arrived.

Caleb damned the wet, the sand, the insects, and the lady ancestors of all railroaders and army officers, and when he had emptied his pitcher he sighed.

"Horace, which way can we drain this pond of ours? The ground is flatter than a two-dollar trombone."

Trooper Bigod pounded his thumb instead of a tent peg, but merely sucked in his breath, which proved he had not been born a Christian.

"Once we're off duty that hotel might serve us a meal," Caleb said. "That is, if officer rank and clean shirts are not requisite." The dark-skinned trooper still said nothing, so Caleb went on. "I haven't had a decent meal since our last blowout at the Menger in San Anton', nor a sound sleep, nor a bath. And even my spit's

got saddlesores. . . . Listen to me, you noble savage, or say something!"

Horace Bigod squinted at the silver onions on the towers of Mr. Plant's tourist Alhambra. "'Constantinople, after a stirring siege, fell to the Turks in 1453,'" he quoted in a high singsong. "I learned that at Carlisle, but they never said the Turks got to Tampa. Grab that tent rope and pull!"

Being more or less accustomed to his bunkie after three weeks of army marriage to him, Caleb grinned and went to work.

They had been introduced the way the Army conducts such formalities: "Fall in! Tall ones on the right, runts on the left. . . . Goddamit, Hawkins, don't you know the left cheek of your butt from the right? . . . Te-n-n-shut! Now, all you monkeys' abortions try to remember the man on your left—*left*, Hawkins! He's your mate for shelter-tent drill. At ease! Take a look at him."

Horace Bigod was majestically ugly. His father, subchief Breaks-the-Pot-on-Him, of the Oglala Sioux, had been a homely man, but Horace's inheritance had been touched up by smallpox and football. The eagle beak of the Oglalas now was canted permanently left on his face as the result of trying to break up the "guards back" ferocity of T. Truxton Hare of the University of Pennsylvania, who outweighed Horace by forty pounds, and his face and neck were waffled with pockmarks. His eyes were basalt, set as close together as goobers in a shell; his hands were scoops, but in later years Caleb could not recall ever having seen his bunkie drop anything, or stumble on his small feet. Like "Ruby Robert" Fitzsimmons, Trooper Bigod was a smooth bear from the waist up and skinny as a leper below.

"We may as well introduce ourselves," Caleb said the day they first had fumbled with dog tents. "I am Caleb Hawkins of Philadelphia." When he got no instant reply, Caleb added, "You savvy United States?"

"Heap savvy, Foureyes," the Indian had said after studying Caleb's face. "My name is Horace Bigod—got the Horace off a blackboard before I could read and the Bigod from a book when I learned. My real name is Two Strikes, which I hear is laughable.

I am twentyfive, unmarried, and all that I am or ever hope to be I owe to Captain Pratt of Carlisle Institute, who makes tinsmiths out of savages. I think *Hiawatha* is dandy reading, but the first bald white man I ever saw made me vomit. I was baptized into the holy Christian Church of Protestant Episcopacy, but I still think the Sioux are sensible in refusing to allow a wife's mother to talk to her son-in-law. That idea is good—for instance, you talk too damn much!"

Caleb's easy tongue had failed him cold.

But then most things were surprises these days. When he had arrived in San Antonio he had discovered that the only billets left in the Rough Riders were in the two newly authorized troops from Indian Territory, and they were hotly competitive. Some easterners as well as western whites were willing to swear that they were as red as Crazy Horse, if necessary, to get in. Caleb had set his chin and determined to bull through, although the thought of campaigning with blanket Indians was depressing—they would smell of pemmican or stewed dog or whatever beastly stuff it was that they loved. However, the day came when an Indian commented on the gamy odor of Caleb and showed him how to rub himself down with clean sand.

At the outset, although he was reconciled to serving without a commission, as many aristocrats were, Caleb had sought an interview with someone in authority, but neither Mr. Roosevelt nor the commanding officer could perceive his value instantly. The colonel was Leonard Wood, M.D. Harvardiensis—captain, U. S. A. Medical Department—Medal of Honor, Apache Campaign—a rugged, handsome blond not yet forty. Wood's new rank had gone to his head, Caleb thought when he was passed along to Major Brodie. However, Brodie scarcely glanced over his pince-nez before he shunted Caleb to Captain Allyn Capron, commanding one of the new troops, who in turn had gotten rid of Caleb to a first sergeant named Higgins, who passed him on to . . .

"Who may you be, sonny?" Corporal Seiffert had asked.

The corporal was his last hope, Caleb thought, hardly knowing whether he was more dizzy or angry. Eventually Caleb learned

that corporals are first hopes, but only after Mr. Hawkins had become Trooper Hawkins for a while. Seiffert had a fighting paunch and hash marks to the elbow; his build was as stylish as a tugboat, but his muscles would have excited the admiration of an adult rhinoceros. He was happier when he had a pair of refractory recruits to deal with—one to each hand balanced better—for he failed to see how anybody could get a bang out of one cymbal. His favorite method of reproof had earned him the nickname of Noodleknocker, or Noodle for short, but no “farmer” with less than three hitches in the service dared to presume the familiarity, although on occasion the Noodle would permit one to buy him a beer. He was a man who knew his dignity because he had earned it.

Seiffert did, however, have a grudging awe of marksmen, for after years on desert and plain he still could not hit the floor with his alkali-encrusted sombrero. Caleb’s talent impressed him, and showed when a stumble-footed lot of red men and white were consigned to the Noodle by the doctors.

“You ride, Foureyes?” the corporal asked.

“Yes, sir. Very well.”

“Can sit a horse,” mumbled Seiffert, licking a pencil and making a mark on a paper. “You shoot fine, too, huh?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Cut the ‘sir.’ You call me ‘corporal.’ Education?”

Caleb said he had gone to college and—

“Can read and write,” Seiffert said, and made another mark. “All right, line up over yonder with the rest of them mothers’ joys.”

He hiked them to a clearing on the Exposition Grounds, where Captain Capron, a noted rider himself, was testing the horsemanship of men who had forked saddles shortly after some neighbor women had slapped breath into them; at a distance another group in charge of gaitered regulars were firing at targets. Men hunkered near both proving grounds awaiting their turns and chewing tobacco or grass-blades. Few resembled Caleb. The Indians, bony-faced and gaunt, wore deerskin show clothes hung with quills and

claws, and some had red-banded feathers stuck in circlets about their heads—Horace told Caleb later that each stripe signified an honorable wound. Other bucks mixed frock coats with fringed leggings, and one had added polish to his finery by wearing a necktie without a collar.

The white men seemed like characters out of *Deadwood* Dick thrillers to Caleb, but for the first time in his sartorially correct life he knew that he, and not the other fellow, was out of place and odd. Their Stetsons, Colts, and Mexican vests looked proper under a brassy Texas sky, he admitted, and he the fool in a tailored English suit.

When he rode he could not tell whether he satisfied Capron or not, because the burly young captain with sweeping mustachios passed no word. He put ten riders at a time through their paces, calling orders in a voice which rang like a cornet over the hoofs, to trot, canter, turn, and gallop, while a pillar of dust and non-com profanity rose over Bexar County. Some who had trouble obeying commands quickly, and one who roweled his mount bloody, were not passed along to the firing line, so Caleb guessed they had been winnowed.

"Now this here's a rifle," Corporal Seiffert told Caleb. "The end with a hole in her lets the bullet fly, but you know all about that, because you told me."

"Well, Corporal, I——"

"Crawfishing, eh? Jawbone sharpshooter, eh? Them glasses of youm——"

"They have nothing to do with my shooting. I've never handled a Springfield before. Show me the action, please."

The Noodle looked at the dude's once bright shoes, his manicure, his wilted tie, and then at his chin. Then he became businesslike.

"O.K. Here's how. . . ."

After a few sighting shots Caleb rang in ten for ten prone. A number of his competitors, bothered by the unfamiliar weapon or having been more at home with hand guns, did poorly, but most did as well as Caleb and with a casual rapidity that astonished him.

The westerners did not include Caleb in their friendly libels on one another, but the dude's careful precision interested some.

"On your feet!"

Only Caleb and two others, an Indian and a cowboy with croquet-wicket legs, shot perfect scores standing, and something like envy flitted across Seiffert's broad face. He whispered with the sergeant in charge, a dour man with ginger hair and a freshly boiled look whom he called Chisholm.

"As I call your names form a single line to the right of this table," the sergeant shouted. "Men whose names I don't call report back to the sergeant major. Porter—Carroll—Zeigler—Carmack—Hawkins . . ."

Caleb felt manlier being chosen with the select than ever he had since the first time a girl had moaned, "Oh, Caleb, you're so strong!"

Sergeant Chisholm said, when his turn came, "We'll continue on with you tomorrow, Hawkins. If you still want to join up, sign this paper, here."

Already Caleb had found that the Army meant papers as much as bullets, so he signed, here. Chisholm initialed the sheet and then made a mistake by asking the recruit how he had learned to shoot. The sergeant even smiled.

Caleb answered casually. What he said was truth, but he should have suppressed it until his hearers were prepared, since some truths are like that.

"Quite easily after I burned a blind spot in one eye. Really nothing I can take credit for."

The quiet was loud for a moment.

"Mister, in the Army when you're asked a question——"

Caleb interrupted. "But that's the fact! I looked at an eclipse of the sun through a home-smoked glass when I was a child and burned a dead spot in the retina of my right eye. It makes aiming a cinch, naturally."

"Naturally," Chisholm said, and turned to Seiffert. "Am I the only one that's dumb around here? What's he talking about?"

The Noodle glowered at Caleb, feeling somehow responsible for

him. He already had planned to get the Indian, the warped cowboy, and this sharpshooting dude in his own squad and was thinking of sucker bets he could win, but now another idea seized him . . . and his hands closed slowly in reflex.

"I don't know" was all he said, however.

Chisholm faced Caleb again. "Now let's get down to tacks. I ask you friendly-like how you learn to shoot, and you tell me it's easy because you're blind in the peeper you sight with." Sweet fellowship fled his voice suddenly; he exploded with a bang which tilted the eavesdroppers back on their high boot heels. "Now talk, you *by-blow son of a polecat!* What the hell do you think I'm running around here, a goddam minstrel show?"

Caleb talked. "Sir—Corp—I mean Sergeant—I wasn't kidding! I'm not blind—just in a spot. It lines up dead center—when I draw a bead, that is—and when the sights and the spot line up, that's it! I mean, when I can't see either the front sight or the rear sight or the bull's-eye, I let fly—and I hit the target because I can't see it. No—I mean—well, how can I make it plainer? Look—I'll diagram it. See now, I——"

Men who had been attracted by the sergeant's scream studied Caleb, who perspired. The freak fascinated the Indians, one of whom made as if to touch the eye in question, but the cowpokes and gunmen winked at one another and rolled their quids. . . . They appreciated a tall yarn as good as the next hombre, but this army foreman, he cain't. . . .

Somebody snickered, and Chisholm's face paled almost to its original shade of scarlet. "That'll be all!" he said, thrusting Caleb's diagram away. "That—will—be—all!" he told the onlookers, and embellished his opinion with remarks to which they listened with reverence.

When he could see again, Chisholm told Seiffert, "Corporal, if this high-collared, four-eyed, kink-headed son ever is took into this outfit, I want you to see that the thrushfoot's *learned!*"

Even one of the Indians, a certain Mister Eleven, who was so unmatched a marblehead that Troop L became proud of him, understood vaguely what the sergeant meant by "learned."

Under Seiffert's instruction afterward Caleb often wished he never had left home. One of the most overpowering arguments in favor of the universal peace his Quaker forebears wanted, he came to believe, was that corporals would have to line up for soup and a handout with their employment gone. The rest of the Noodle's squad thought so too—it was one of the few original common grounds to all.

None except Caleb had been born east of Genoa, Kansas; the track, polo, crew, and football stars of the East were in other troops, notably K. In the Noodle's squad of L only three were athletes in the gamester sense, Caleb, Horace Bigod, and Fred Murray, but the rest had the unlearnable co-ordination of pumas. Murray, who strummed a g'it-tar and whined songs about people who went to Denver or went wrong, had played baseball. He told Caleb 'twan't no trick pitching for the Chloride Salts down in Arizona, because in the first place Chloride wa'an't such a big place, and in the second there wa'an't nobody else loco enough to work that hard. He also could convert a deuce into a perfect trey with his Colt "about from boardwalk to hitchin' post acrost the street," and gloried in the nickname of Rattlesnake Fred, since he bragged one had bitten him, back a spell, and had cashed in.

The bowlegged whiffet who had shot a perfect offhand score with the Springfield was a Wells, Fargo shotgun rider named Smoky Stu Woodruff, whose boast was that he could ride the most vicious or "smoky" horse ever foaled. The sturdy curves of his legs made him center rush when Troop L horsed around at football, but his playmates always had to be sure Smoky had removed his spurs. One day they admonished him in a horse trough because he had climbed, still beautifully booted and jingling, to the peak of a human pyramid during calisthenics.

Tex Kingsland was a cadaverous individual "roughly nine foot, and no thicker'n a quirt" who ate and slept for three. He was the most motionless unpetrified thing on earth, but was a blur when answering chow call. The puckered scar on his cheek, he said, was the result of being mistaken for a fence post by a wire-stringing gang, but sometimes his mates heard he'd gotten it in a Dallas

goose ranch during an argument with the piano player. They had disagreed who was going to play on the black keys and who on the white, so the piano player had taken a chew on Tex.

Others of the squad who went to Cuba included Faro Frank Close, once a dentist but more recently a gambler, who said he had merely converted from one kind of gouging to another. Bigfoot Corrigan, a half-breed Cheyenne, drank pepper in his coffee and slung on dog because he had been to Yurup with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Happy Jack Geoghegan was so called because he never had been known to smile, and although only one photograph ever had been taken of him, it was popular in post offices from Brownsville to El Reno. Bigod, the Sioux, avoided the only other full-blooded Indian, Black Bill Colescott, for the sufficient reason that Bill was a Ponca. "We kill them, not because we hate them, but because they're Poncas," Horace explained. The only tubby man of the squad was a breed of indeterminate origins named Benny DuKoff, who had been a bounty hunter of varmints in the mountains and who had a laugh which split mirrors. Except for Benny and the Noodle, all were lean, from years of punching cattle, keeping ahead of posses, and betting into straight flushes.

They helped the days pass piquantly for Caleb at San Anton'. Before the first week was out he had been compelled to knock most of them kicking, in sportsmanly succession, to prove that his trouncing of a sidewalk tough had been no fluke. They admired his ability to box, and so stopped putting horny toads and barbed wire in his bedding. They applauded his ability for telling the biggest damn lies north of Chihuahua—in addition to that twister about his marksmanship, which Caleb now disclaimed out of sheer weariness—they guffawed to hear that ten thousand people would turn out to watch some guys rattle over a little bitty football, and were enchanted by an imagination which could contrive the description of a Yale lock.

They began to feel like a regiment when they got their uniforms. Distinguishing them from the solid "canonical blue" of the regulars were their brown trousers and leggings and their habit of denting their off-the-face slouch hats to suit individual fancy.

They cheered when the colonel announced that Colts would be the side arms instead of the regulars' sabers, and pledged allegiance to three mascots, a dog, an eagle, and a mountain lion named Florence who disliked the dog, the eagle, and civilians.

Mounted drill came easily but military courtesy was pesky—"Howdy, Cap'n," it seemed, would not do for any officer, and even if he were your own lieutenant you still had to say "yessir" instead of "sho' nuff." However, there were no courts-martial and few desertions. When they loosed a volley of revolver shots at a San Antonio concert, which reminded the Prussian bandmaster of the Battle of Sedan, they were forgiven—with entire good will, they explained, they had reckoned to help the Dutchman get the most out of "A Cavalry Fantasy" because, doggone it, the drummer was a-laying down on him. Any seasoned army man could have told when they detrained at Ybor City on June third that their spirit was high. It was clear from their complaints. . . .

Caleb's mind drifted back to the present as he slung his roll into his shelter tent. Rising, he grabbed at the sky to loosen cramped muscles and yawned wide. Then he saw—it couldn't be, but it was!—Stretch Spangler with a fluff on his arm. Man, she rolled a natural hootchy-kootchy that would make a preacher lay his Bible down!

"Howdy, Stretch!" he called.

Warren peered at the sunburned and dusty cavalryman and then covered his eyes.

"Well, I'll be eternally g-g——"

"Anh-anh-anh!" Caleb warned. "There is a lady present. How do you do, Miss——"

Rowena nodded without enthusiasm. . . . A common soldier, and my, how he needed a bath!

Warren's room at the Tampa Bay was busy. Caleb felt the need of such do-si-do as barber, manicurist, and bootblack, so he and

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Florida No. Not Known

Horace began with baths and the procession of flunkies started. Their host scouted up clean underwear for them; the correspondents were happy to help the Rough Riders, especially when one was a guaranteed Sioux Indian. Horace had to repeat in every gory detail, for the benefit of the *London Times* man, how he had scalped General Custer. On his second foray Horace threw in a victory screech that curled Mr. Akers's beard.

"Oh, but I say," the little Englishman murmured to Caleb, "how bloody awful! Was that cricket?"

Horace had sharp ears. "Mister, we weren't on the warpath against crickets," he snarled.

"The next time you massacre Custer, Horace," Caleb said when they were alone, "I wish you'd cut out the grunts. You sound like feeding time at the zoo. Besides, it isn't nice to lie to a man who gave you the undershirt off his back."

"O.K.," Horace said.

Warren lay on the bedcovers laughing quietly. "Akers is no sucker," he said. "He'll inquire around and find out that the chief here couldn't have been born when Custer was killed."

"I was too!" Horace said. "I was three, and I got a cavalry kepi to wear. Us kids went around for days making whiteskins bite the dust."

"And now he's a tinsmith," Caleb said, adjusting his neckerchief to various negligent positions before the mirror. "How the mighty are fallen."

"It's a good trade," Horace said. "Indians don't use tin pots, so—no pots, no work. Fine business to be in."

"Well, you certainly can't expect to go about scalping for a living," Warren said.

"Hell," said the Indian, staring at the first manicure of his life, "my father always said there was no future in killing white men any way you looked at it. No honor to it—not like counting coups on Poncas. White men were too helpless, and they fought dirty, too."

"What throats do you two plan to cut tonight, by the way?" Warren asked.

Caleb gave his curly hair a last lick and sat on the sofa, draping a leg over the arm. "Brother Spangler, it depends on you. Ah—now, for instance, does Miss Bates have agreeable friends?"

"Mrs. Bates, not Miss. She's a widow.

"Better yet."

"Why?" said Horace.

"Just a tribal superstition of ours," Warren said. "They're less inclined to overrate themselves. Caleb, don't you ever think of anything else besides skirts?"

"What else is there?"

"Well, you could learn the five-string banjo, for instance, or read, or——"

"I can't carry a tune in a bucket, and books hurt my eyes. And, anyhow, look who's talking! You've had your whacks, if I recall correctly, and I do. Remember that girl in your senior year who I had to console when you told her you were going to leave the world and become a barefoot monk?"

"The one who always asked Intelligent Questions, or the one who always slapped at me and said, 'Oh, you!'"

"See what I mean?" Caleb said to Horace. "Come on now, Stretch. You must know more than one woman since you've been in Tampa."

"Uh-huh," Warren said, and gaped at the ceiling. . . . This single-track Don Juan wouldn't believe he'd been working—when there was work, Warren thought—and had been trying to contrive work when there wasn't any, but . . . An idea struck Warren.

"As a matter of fact, Caleb, I'm in a dilemma, and you can help me."

. . . Mrs. Bates might be unsophisticated, but she had a goal at which she pointed with direction and force. In the beginning of their acquaintance he had suspected it, but last night she had verified her intention quite candidly. With the moonlight in her hair she had lain on the beach resting her head on his arm, and had talked. The night was quiet, and their cozy corner of the sands was private and sheltered for their "romantic purpose." For Warren, she'd said, the purpose was pastime and nothing more, but for

herself she required an Understanding if the—you know—romantics were to go on. Oh, she didn't begrudge any man his idea of amusement, but the passion they had spent within the hour was a trial sample only, and Warren should know that. It was not nice for a woman to be widowed in full bloom—Rowena had said "full bloom"—to be left without children to divert her and without security. She ached like the dickens to—well, find a good man, both young and well off.

He'd begun to gobble some equivocal rubbish, but she had smiled and said, "Foolish boy, we startled you, didn't we?" But he could relax; she was no maiden who plays at daring advances and then flees hysterically, and she was being frank with him because he was ineligible—oh, not that she wasn't fond, very fond, of him. But he just wasn't—"We're being frank still, remember?"—just wasn't rich enough. Then her lips had closed over his again, when he'd started to speak, with, "Hush, boy, and be kind to me again. . . . You have much aside from money that will make some girl very happy." If only the prospects she'd met through him at the Tampa Bay who were well fixed—financially—were not so old and so silly. . . .

"As a matter of fact, Caleb," Warren said, "I'm in a dilemma, and you can help me."

"Delighted, old chap," Caleb said without delight. "I owe you a service for all this—— Horace, nix on the bay rum! You stink worse than a fire in a tanyard now!"

"You took a girl off my hands at the Ivy Ball, remember?" Warren said softly, watching him.

Caleb's muscles tightened, but he lounged back on the sofa with his hands behind his head and said with what he thought was just the right touch of indifference:

"Yes. A nice girl she was, as I recall."

"Very. I think we'll be married someday."

The curlyhead sprang up and thrust out his hand. "Why, Stretch, you old—why, congratulations!"

Inwardly Warren groaned. . . . Something *had* gone on between Susan and this—this poop, while he was in Reading, but he

resolved not to let his mind dwell on it. After all, he'd had no claim on her then, nor was sure he wanted to stake one, and—hell! silly affairs happened to anybody. Warren conceded that some extraordinarily shabby ones had been his part in the past, but, damn it all, anyhow!

It would serve Fancy Dan here good and right if he could be embroiled with . . .

"Rowena," Warren said. "She's expecting me to go for a moonlight row tonight, but I doubt if I should leave the hotel. Rumor is smelling up the place. . . . Yes, I think we're due to sail. His Excellency's three hundred pounds was warping chairs in the telegraph room and the Secretary of War was on the line personally, I heard. Also, Shafter's staff show white around the pupils of their eyes and don't even stop to flirt their sabretaches for the gals. They have that important I-know-what-I-know look, too."

"You mean——"

"Look out, Cuba, here we come!"

"Rats, that wasn't what I meant!" Caleb snorted. "What about you and your friend Rowena?"

"If you're interested, here's her address," Warren said, scribbling, "and a few words to explain you as proxy for me. She'll probably be delighted for the change. But maybe you'd prefer not to desert Horace?"

"Forget it," said the Indian. "Probably couldn't go places with him, anyhow. I'd be just a gaudier kind of Jim Crow."

"I never thought of that," Warren said, lifting an eyebrow.

"Why should you?" said Horace. "You're purebred American."

Caleb was suspicious, as Warren expected he would be. "You're mighty openhanded with your lady friend. Has she got her original legs and teeth?"

"I warrant them genuine. Come-easy-go-easy Spangler, that's me."

"And she gave me a double-O this morning as if I was something that'd stuck to her shoe."

"Your greasy galluses were showing, Romeo," Warren said, and

yawned. "She thought you were a bum, but when I told her who you really are—well, say!"

"All right, who really am I?"

Warren rolled over to his elbows. "We southern gentlefolk are just as particular whom we associate with as Main Liners back home. You're comfortably furnished with dough—not vulgarly, of course—and that's important. By the way, I hope you're eligible for the Barons of Runnymede. I elected you this morning for her benefit."

"Come clean—what's the plot?"

"No plot. I've got to stay in tonight, and you're interested in going out. And the beauteous Mrs. Bates now knows that the horse valet she saw this morning combines the ancestry of a Wadsworth, the gallantry of a Greenway, the upholstery of a McIlhenny—Why, she was ashamed of herself for not having recognized quality right off!"

Caleb uttered a word, but he was less suspicious. After all, he was a Hawkins, but no man could look a credit to his extraction just off a sooty train and up to his tail in mud. . . . He glanced in the mirror, twirling his sombrero in a forefinger.

"Very well, you're on, Stretch. If I hadn't seen this female for myself I'd have said you were working off damaged goods. I'm still not sure you aren't, but I must warn you: if she's passable, I'll cut you out. No hard feelings?"

"Nope. Anyhow, thanks for your honesty."

"*Noblesse oblige.*" Caleb put the slip of paper Warren had written into a pocket, clapped him on the shoulder, and went out.

Horace picked up the bay rum again and said, "You didn't happen to run into any high-class Seminole girls while you were at it, did you?"

His host began to laugh, and continued to laugh until he fell back on the bed. The Indian viewed him sourly.

"Very funny, very funny."

"Sorry, chief—private joke. If you wait a few minutes while I answer a letter, we'll see what fun we can scare up in town."

"I thought you were staying in? You said——"

"Sure, sure. After we do the town. Make yourself at home."

Warren sat at his desk to reread Susan's last letter.

My dear Warren [it said],

I am sure it's none of my concern what you do with your spare time, so—if you don't mind—I'd prefer to hear no more about your Mrs. Bates. She sounds like a schemer to me, and I'm surprised at you. And you with a college education!

Now to be plain myself, but in a nicer way, I'll tell you that I miss you. Maybe I oughtn't to, because it's not demure, but let it go. Ma and Gus miss you too, so I'm not the only one. You'll get a swelled head, but I had to say I missed you. Absence makes the heart grow fonder (T. H. Bayly). So true!

Why can't you tell me right out that you love me, without mixing me all up? I like it when you call me the "light of your life," because that's cute, but don't add, "little glowworm," darn it! You can be so sweet, so why mix it up with worms, YOU BIG GALOOT!! Darn it, I wish we could just once talk about affection without getting into a fight!

Your experiences in Tampa sound interesting, even the ones you say are dull. Do tell me everything, because I've never been anywhere. I won't let on to a soul what you say is confidential, except maybe to Ma and Gus and perhaps Hattie, because she's my best friend. They aren't "outsiders," are they? I'm so proud of you taking up with Mr. Davis, but Mr. Crane sounds crazy, maybe because he's a poet. (Are they married, Warren? You didn't say.) I am keeping your letters, of course, and all the clippings from the Ledger. Maybe you can do a book at some future date from the collection. I'm nobody, but I'd love to think I helped a man write a book. Just think of the wonderful people you're meeting (except some) and the history you are seeing made while it's making! Doesn't it thrill you? It does me!

I'd love to boast about you at the Arsenal because I'd love the girls to be jealous, especially Hattie Bomberger. She's getting so stuck-up because her beau's a lieutenant in camp at Mount Gretna, but I knew him before she did, and my goodness, he's not so much! My goodness, I can just hear him giving snappy commands when he always had to think five minutes before he said, "Yes, it's raining." I've shown Hattie your newspaper stories, anyhow—I'll burst

if I can't brag about you just a little, Warren! (Don't forget to let me know if I can read the secret parts of your letters to Ma and Gus, at least, will you, Warren?)

Gus wants to know what you think of the Phillies so far, because they have lost seven straight games because they have "brainless pitching, dopey fielding, and yellow playing," your paper says. That is very unkind, because, after all, games are only for fun. Gus says any team that can't beat Brooklyn and Washington takes the booby prize, and he's written a letter to Manager Stallings to tell him what to do. He wrote a scorcher to Senator Quay too, when his candidate beat Mr. Wanamaker last week, but isn't he silly to think a senator will pay any attention to him, even if he does sign his name August Kelley?

Ma says hello and wants to know if she can sew you something, or anything. She means it.

As for me, I'd like to do something for you too, but I don't know what. Please tell me. The days are weeks since you left, and all the same. We take turns on the night shifts, that's all. Such busyness at the Arsenal you can imagine, I guess. Also, they say that Captain Lassac, the man who's invented a pointed bullet, is going to start piecework during the emergency. That will mean more work and money for me, weighing the work, but I don't know whether I'll like it. The work, I mean.

Now I must close. Ma and I are going to church. She's been under the weather for a while, and this will be her first outing. She likes the organist but can't stand the minister.

I do love you, Warren dear. Keep telling me the same.

Yours truly,
Susan

P.S. Is this Bates person very good-looking?

Warren wrote:

Dear, sweet, my Susie—

This in some haste, because I have a tame Indian in my room waiting. He came in this morning with the Rough Riders, or Teddy's Terrors, or whatever, and so did another terror, our old and valued friend, Caleb Hawkins.

Surprised? You shouldn't be. He's unpredictable, or perhaps I ought to say untrustworthy—but there's no sense blackguarding

the fellow. After all, you don't know him as intimately as I do, and aren't interested either, you said.

I have time to say I love you, my fiery (notice spelling) fusty-boots, and that's about all. After this Sioux, Horace Bigod—I wonder where he got that monicker?—has seen the elephant, I must come back and get to work. It may be worth staying up all night, for the transports are being fitted and are loading.

By all means let Ma and Gus read my letters, but draw the line at Hattie, I pray you. There are enough wild rumors about this expedition in circulation already without adding another minor prophet who'll have "inside information."

That idea about me doing a book is a good one, but—Susie, you're pretty sure you'd be mighty useful, now confess! When you write archly I can almost see you flutter your eyelids and stand waiting for the protestations you expect. You're a nice little gal, honey, and I'm nuts on you, but—shucks, cut it out!

As for la Bates, she's not my style, so stop fretting. She was a pleasant boat ride for a time, to adapt a simile from a local ladies'-wear ad—"A well-corseted woman reminds one of a white ship sailing over the sea." Yes indeed, Rowena's very beautiful if you like the type, which you wouldn't. Caleb may like her a lot better—he's out with her tonight, and I feel relieved, with this military pot seething as it is. Isn't it the limit how he seems to show up to take a young lady off my hands when I need him most?

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(Telegraphic dispatches by Warren Spangler to the Public Ledger, with interpolations from his notebook.)

TAMPA, JUNE 7—FIFTH CORPS EMBARKING PORT TAMPA. SPANGLER.

TAMPA, JUNE 7—AT TEN P.M. DESTINATION OF FIFTH CORPS STILL UNKNOWN. SANTIAGO DE CUBA POSSIBLE SINCE NAVY CLAIMS SILENCING OF FORTS THERE, BUT PORTO RICO NOT OUT OF QUESTION. MILES, CHIEF OF STAFF, HERE BUT SAYS TROOPS WILL SAIL UNDER SHAFTER AT DAYBREAK. SPANGLER.

TAMPA, JUNE 7—BIGELOW ARTICLE IN HARPER'S CAUSING ROW HERE AMONG CORRESPONDENTS. RESPECTFULLY SUGGEST YOU USE EARLIER

SUPPRESSED REPORTS BY ME FOR REWRITE BACKGROUND OF THIS RAREE SHOW. INDESCRIBABLE CONFUSION OF TROOP EMBARKATION PARALLELS PRECEDING LOADING OF SUPPLIES. HELL WILL BE NO MORE CROWDED ON JUDGMENT DAY. WILL SEND ALL TELEGRAMS AND LETTERS IN DUPLICATE FROM HERE ON. SPANGLER.

Poultney Bigelow broke the ice, or *Harper's* did, by not blue-penciling what he sent, and one result has been that R. H. Davis is cutting Poult dead and even calling him "traitorous"—wow! But Bigelow is right: the German attaché must "be amused by our fumbling," for everyone else is who isn't outraged by it. Miles and Shafter will lead a mob of men and call it an American Expeditionary Force. The mob is hot to have at "the dagos"; whether it's the valor of ignorance or not, their spirit would rock those race purists in Europe who insist Americans can't fight because we're too polyglot. But there are hundreds of troops here who have yet to see a rifle, hundreds more who haven't fired theirs; many are down with typhoid and malaria, and all are hungry. Crane and I have been panhandled on American streets by American soldiers on the same day we have seen carloads of foodstuffs pulling out for the northern markets. Florida's fault? No. The Army's? Maybe. America's? Certainly.

The inexperience of our generals in water-borne operations is enough cause for misgivings without adding the confusion, but to top their shortcomings with the fact that none but a few antique Civil War vets have seen a body of troops larger than a regiment is to tilt the chute toward disaster. The volunteer officers naturally are worse than the regulars, the blame of which falls not on them, or the Army, or Congress, but on the criminal indifference of the citizens of the United States. No taxpayer would want one of his expensive battleships entrusted to amateur sailors, but he never thinks twice about committing the life of his son to tyros on land. Nope—grandpa's musket needs a new flint, and *that's* sufficient for sonny, and so is grandpa's experience. . . .

At Port Tampa last week Crane and I sat on a well-nailed crate without a mark on it but the flaming bomb of Army Ordnance and the letters "S.A." for Springfield Arsenal. Along came a dirty lieu-

tenant and a dirtier private, clutching hatchets, to inspect the box and curse dismally. Looking for biscuit to put aboard the *Seneca*, the lieutenant said, "Either of you fellows see any boxes around that looked like biscuit?" Crane said no, sorry, but why didn't contractors plainly mark their shipments? Why didn't the Army require it? "What!" said the soldier, "and cheat us of the fun of treasure hunts?"

Steve and I made jokes about the business, but I wondered if he also felt the queer sense of personal humiliation that I felt over it. . . .

The contents of the freight cars apparently are the only secrets of the expedition, for ship movements and battle plans have been as secret as garlic in a stew. . . . Our heavy artillery has been found, callooh callay! The Army mislaid them, a whole trainload, just as a schoolma'am might her umbrella, and some generals found them when they were up at the springs near Ocala bathing their aches. The philosophic freight agent said he reckoned somebody would find theirselves short a sidingful of big guns and come take delivery. This incident shades even the master stroke of the War Department in shipping an entire battery of field artillery down here by Railway Express, at so much the pound! . . . The Tampa post office is tiny; it can't keep up with bills of lading, army mail, and Tampa's own important letters all at once. Hence dirty lieutenants with hatchets must play guessing games and generals with gout find a siege train by accident. The postal clerks are out of their depths in many ways: Caleb was haw-hawing over a letter one of the *Rough Riders* had returned to him as "undeliverable foreign matter," because it was addressed to Spuyten Duyvil, N.Y. . . .

Someday we may know why Tampa was picked as the port of embarkation; its nearness to the theater of war is vastly offset by its deficiencies. There are no warehouses for sorting and inspecting supplies, not enough fresh water for the troops to wash with, the shore front has only a ten-foot draught, and the deepwater port is miles away. Local papers said the railroad could "handle almost any number of cars in an easy and expeditious manner, so perfect

are the arrangements made for its own business." That last phrase is right, anyhow; while the desperate loading of the transports was going on, the Plant System continually ran excursion trains right down to the dockside, to the one solitary pier, over the single track.

TAMPA, JUNE 7—ALL REGULARS WILL SAIL, PLUS ROUGH RIDERS, SEVENTYFIRST NEW YORK, AND SECOND MASSACHUSETTS. PERSONAL GUESS OF SIZE WHOLE COMMAND IS SOMETHING OVER THE TEN THOUSAND ADMIRAL SAMPSON SAYS CAN TAKE SANTIAGO, BUT DESTINATION STILL IS MYSTERY. TRYING TO GET TRANSPORTATION MYSELF ON SOME NEWSPAPER TUG. THERE ARE MORE OF THEM THAN TRANSPORTS. SPANGLER.

The kettle boils. Watched Lieutenant Parker's Gatlings briskly transferred from train to ship with no waste motions and obvious foreplanning, and then watched his agonies when tons of miscellaneous junk were piled on his guns by somebody who outranked him. If we meet Spaniards on the beach when we land, which is reasonable to expect, he'll have to shoot his way out of the Cherokee's hold first.

I'm no soldier and don't know the lingo, but if this masquerade under the five-dollar word of "logistics" makes sense I'll put in for a quiet padded cell at Kirkbride's—why, a dumb Dutch farmer up Lancaster way wouldn't organize his barnyard the way they're packing these boats! The tools the engineers will need first on landing—spades, crowbars, picks, et cetera—are slung in at the bottom, with mountains of baggage overlaying them, to prevent their clanking from disturbing the captains' sleep, I suppose. I've sat by the hour, day after day, watching stuff taken on helter-skelter, and now see the men embarking in the same way. Fieldpieces on one vessel, caissons on another—then they pull out into the bay to loiter while others move in to ship the ammunition, the horses, and now the gunners. No, I'm no soldier, but I'm a Pennsylvania Dutchman who knows a *dummer esel*, arse-end-up way of doing things when he sees it! How can I send home inspiring stories of American competence when the Eagle's keepers have made him look like a wet turkey with the pip?

I got a curt answer from a Medical Department officer when I asked about his bailiwick, so being once ruffled twice curious, I pumped a staff major who's awed by reporters. By order, by God, only three ambulances are going—for perhaps fifteen thousand men! That number wouldn't do for a Loyal Order of Hibernians clambake! But the absolute last straw was to hear that no medicines are aboard any ship yet, although they're to leave in a few hours! Won't anybody but "dagos" get hurt on this picnic, or what? I'm getting so nervous I stutter constantly—this must be the way a Pilgrim felt waiting for Plymouth Rock to land on him.

Jack Fox says it's on the level about leaving at dawn, surgically equipped or no. I can't believe it, but Fox is an old hand and has his "ins"; he's heard that political considerations demand instant movement. Washington fears intervention by France or Germany if we wait till fall, or even until this dog's breakfast of an expedition is set, so the President has kicked the Secretary of War in the pants, who has kicked the Chief of Staff, who has kicked Shafter, who has— Well, the sorest behinds are on those who are working three shifts around the clock, struggling up a fifty-foot incline of fluid sand to heave boxes into the ships, and sleeping where they drop.

My gallant major on the staff regrets he can't confirm the destination yet, because that would be a breach of faith as an officer and a gentleman, which is pure bushwa. I detest the s.o.b. and myself, but through him I've gotten steers which have been useful even when I could not break them. God knows how many reporters he's feeding; I can see why, as Crane says, the Navy won't allow a newspaperman on its ships when they're on business, nor foreign attachés either. The Army seems to be more accessible, because officers like my toad see a war as their chance to press-agent themselves toward the top of the constipated promotion lists. . . . Just the same, I feel sorry for the gray-haired junior officers. There are two Captain Caprons, for instance, good men, who have more in common than rank. They are father and son.

Discreditable tales travel faster by land than by sea anyhow, because of the nature of the walking and talking. . . . A grand speci-

men of officer and gentleman was the drunk who was a big operator in Quartermaster here. Even though he was protected by superiors and covered up for by juniors, out of that sad loyalty all professionals have for one another, he refused to sober up and get on with feeding and clothing the misables camped around Tampa. Finally he went berserk with the d.t.s like any bum in a drunk-tank and rampaged through the hotel one night mauling women and men alike. Was he jailed? Lord, no—they transferred him to a better job! . . .

TAMPA, JUNE 8—DESTINATION STILL UNCERTAIN. ADD TO PRESS RATE COPY FILED ONE A.M.: HAVE COUNTED TWENTYNINE TRANSPORTS. NO MEDICINES ABOARD BUT LOADING WILL CONTINUE AS SHIPS PULL OUT, FOR AS FAR AS STEVEDORES CAN THROW. UNITS ON ROSTER OF EXPEDITION SO EAGER TO EMBARK THAT GANGPLANKS ARE SCENES OF SPIRITED FIST FIGHTS. ROUGH RIDERS STOLE COAL GONDOLAS TO GET TO PORT, STOLE LAUNCH TO BOARD VESSEL NOT ASSIGNED TO THEM, HELD LATTER AGAINST ASSIGNED REGIMENT AT BAYONET POINT. ROOSEVELT SAID HIS COMPETITORS WERE SHADE LESS READY IN MATTER OF PERSONAL INITIATIVE THAN HIS MEN. EXPLAINED HE COULD NOT FIND DEPOT QUARTERMASTER BECAUSE ASS WAS TAKING NAP. TWO EACH OF SQUADRONS FROM VARIOUS CAVALRY REGIMENTS GOING AS INFANTRY BECAUSE NO ROOM FOR HORSES. INFORMANT SAYS TRANSPORT FACILITIES WERE CALCULATED BY BRITISH METHOD NOW FOUND INAPPLICABLE, SO CAPACITIES WERE OVERESTIMATED BY ONE THIRD. MEN ARE PACKED IN THREE TIERS ON PINE-SCANTLING BUNKS WITHOUT MATTRESSES AND HAVE RIFLES AND AMMUNITION IN BED WITH THEM. NO VENTILATION ON MOST SHIPS AND WATER ABOARD IS PUTRID. MISTER PLANT HAS OFFERED TO REPLENISH WATER AT TWO CENTS GALLON. CENSORSHIP BROKEN DOWN ALONG WITH EVERYTHING ELSE. ALL CORRESPONDENTS AND ATTACHES BEING TAKEN AT UNCLE SAM'S EXPENSE, SO AM OFF TO CATCH S.S. VIGILANCIA. CABLE ADDRESS WILL BE CARE OF U.S. CONSUL, KINGSTON, JAMAICA, B.W.I. NEXT OF KIN FRANK SPANGLER, LANCASTER. VIVA. SPANGLER.

TAMPA, JUNE 8—SAILING POSTPONED. SPANISH FLEET REPORTED BY NAVY THREE HOURS OFFSHORE. SPANGLER.

xiv

The Army's rush to the ships upset a personal expedition of Caleb's, but when he learned they would idle in the bay indefinitely his frustration sharpened unbearably. For, the night before he had been hustled aboard the *Yucatan* to sit down and wait, a green-eyed woman had shown signs of surrender. The horse had had his way with the carriage while Caleb had his with its owner, almost. At the last possible moment Rowena had said, "No, no, man—not this way. It's unbecoming," and so it had been, Caleb agreed when his pulse stopped drumming. Love-making in leggings and spurs was rather cluttered.

However, another triumph so near and then snatched away was vexing, so Caleb fretted as he cleaned a carbine of a type none of the regiment had handled, nor would fire until their first battle. . . . One more night, one more shove, would have sent success to his whole push, damnation! Instead, here he stuck on a reeking tub a few tantalizing miles away from Rowena, bunked between a snoring Indian above and Rattlesnake Fred below, with his nasal guitar and nasal ballads. The racket, the crowding, the stinks! Especially the stinks: of unhappy mules, of unwashed men, and of the consommé of sewage which was called Tampa Bay. So near, yet so far, the perfume of a woman's hair. . . .

The ships rolled at anchor under the sun, because the once-impatient Navy suddenly had begun chasing ghosts; the Spanish warships blockaded in Santiago might not be Cervera's, but "disguised merchantmen"; the battleships and their dreaded new destroyers, *Pluton* and *Furor*, were—where? Tampa as well as Santiago now had a bottled fleet, the cork being uncertainty. The sweltering corps meanwhiled away its time by reshuffling men among the transports, tramping them around the decks in lock step for exercise, and breaking up crap games. Individually the men refreshed themselves on lemonade and fried fish bought from bumboatmen. The food they hauled overside was more than a

trifling luxury with which bored men indulge themselves, for only their officers and the reporters had a mess.

*Little drops of water,
Little plates of beans,
Made the mighty soldier
Use his private means,*

one doughboy wrote.

During their wait Caleb talked with a Negress in one of the bum-boats, got an idea, and made a snap decision. By her he sent a message to Rowena and through her received an encouraging reply. How now: if only officers could use the steam launches to go ashore, was it not up to a private soldier to rustle his own means? Colonel Roosevelt was keen for individual initiative, Caleb whickered, and Rosemary Suggs had a boat, powerful arms, and a sho'-nuff interest in earning a few dollars to help out a soldier boy. Detection was no worry, since the Yucatan's passengers swarmed on all decks, making out-of-bounds areas a ribald joke. Rosemary tittered and promised to be under the taffrail at ten, when Caleb paid her half an agreed fare from his money belt; for all that she looked like a cross between a Wagnerian soprano and Sandow, Mrs. Suggs's heart was a woman's, and the romance of the deal enchanted her as much as Caleb's quarter eagle. . . . Men and womens flew hot, she knew, and jest had to git theyselves a lil lovin'. . . .

As planned, she waited under the stern where a joker had hung a sign reading, "Standing Room Only," and another had added, "And Damn Little of That!" Rosemary held a rope taut, Caleb slid down, and she rowed him away in the darkness to the beach, where he tantalized her with another gold piece if she were sure to pick him up again an hour before dawn.

"Lordy yes, sir," Rosemary promised, "I'll be here. Just you fix to give your lady the best you got." A little plaintively she said, "I sure wish my no-good would scratch to get hisself off a boat just to be with me, come jail or glory. But that little old dried-up man just seem to have lost his natural taste for my peaches."

Caleb caught a ride on a Studebaker wagon into town for the price of stopping for a drink with the quartermaster driver en route. It was safer than the train, which was policed, but it was slower, so that a church clock bonged twelve cracked notes by the time he crouched under a gable of Colonel Evers's house.

There was a light in the square cupola, he saw, but none elsewhere; palm fronds rustled in a light wind with the sound of rain, Spanish moss made bearded prophets of the oaks, a fingernail paring of moon hung over the house, and in the distance a mockingbird with insomnia told himself stories.

Stooping, Caleb picked up a piece of punkwood and tossed it at the upper window Rowena had diagrammed in her note. The sash rose, slowly after one tattletale squeak, and her voice said:

"Who is it?"

"Caleb. Who else could——"

"Sssh! Whisper—Father's still awake in the tower."

"All right. How do I get in?"

"Oh man, you shouldn't!"

"How do I get in, anyhow?"

"How did you get here? Did you have trouble?"

"Great gods and—— I came on all fours! I had to see you before we sailed, sweetheart—isn't that enough?"

No answer. Caleb hissed, "Ssst! Rowena! You still there?"

"Uh-huh. I'm just thinking."

"You're wasting time. How do I——"

"We're like Romeo and Juliet, man!"

Caleb could not share the relish; whispering was making him hoarse, anticipation was making him shake, and mosquitoes were blowing mess call around his neck.

"Sweetheart, if you love me, let's talk Shakespeare inside!"

After another pause she said, "There's a picker's ladder against the tool shed. Watch out it doesn't bump hard on the wall. It's heavy."

It was, he found, but he needed every inch of its twenty feet to reach her sill, for the ground sloped away sharply there. Once a rotten rung broke, giving him a thrill he did not need, and once

the thought capered through his mind that he was not climbing to pick oranges but a winsome fruit, and that both Rosemary and Rowena, alike in being women, doted on ladders and conspiracy.

If being swathed in ten yards of frilly peignoir could be called prepared for bed, Rowena was ready, and a vein beat in Caleb's temple.

"My darling," he said, and caught her.

"What happened about Shakespeare?" she said, but she returned his kisses, and Caleb began to soar. To do him a certain honor, feminine passivity always had bothered him, and not wholly selfishly. Like Casanova the compassionate, he hated to act the cat who takes its pleasure by rubbing itself against a trouser leg or skirt. There might be fun in that for the cat, but all the pants or skirt picked up was stray hairs.

Again cautioning silence, Rowena led him to a divan beside a painted screen, where they talked in murmurs as soft as the light of the candle set on her washstand.

"Mother always sleeps like a brick," she said, trailing her fingers down his cheek, "but Papa is a stay-up. He's probably too far off with dear old General Lee to hear us, but if he does—oh my!"

"There's always the ladder," Caleb said. "Kiss me."

"Your lips, man—my! . . . You couldn't outrun a shotgun load."

"Forget it. Again, sweet. . . ."

How could she plaster him so hotly and not tremble herself? he wondered. Responsive was a frigid word for her, but was it absurd to imagine that she played on his lips as she might on her mandolin? Well, anyhow, the music was exciting—there'll be a hot time in the old town tonight, my ba-ay-bee! . . .

"Isn't it risky coming here like this?" she said at last, settling in his arms. "The Army won't like it, I mean."

"You let me come. Isn't that risky too?"

"I had to, sweet boy. That lovely, lovely note you sent——"

"I repeat it," he said against her throat. "I am mad about you, and the war and the fleet can wait if you, the shimmering vision of my dreams, will open your window to me."

"How you do talk, man!" she said. "So I opened, but we're crazy to run the dangers, I think."

"You sound valiant enough, dear. Anyhow," he said, testing a seasoned shaft, "love is a moth that should far better fly into a flame than die in the snow."

"Uh-huh. . . . Caleb, do you get much snow in Philadelphia?"

The good old poetical arrow, was it warped from wear? With many women it flew home to the heart, and it was original, so she couldn't have scar tissue, but—oh well . . .

"We get our share," he said. "Every place has its own nuisances. Snow, unlike sand, doesn't harbor fleas and chiggers. Just good, honest pneumonia."

"I love our Southern weather, though Papa says it was better before the war, but I can't see how. The War Between the States, that is—nothing's been the same since the war, he says."

"Well, Florida may be fine, but it sure has its drawbacks for a soldier in summertime."

"Papa also says you Yankees have a nerve to sneer at our climate. Oh!—I'm sorry."

"About what?"

"I called you a—Yankee."

"Is it a cussword?"

She giggled. "Sometimes. Caleb, what is it like to be a Yankee? I mean, how does it feel?"

"Fine," he said, and his hands roamed her. "Fine."

"Would I have to be one if I—— Never mind. I'd make the best of it."

"Rowena, I'm aware that your father on the one occasion he couldn't avoid me managed to hiss 'Yankee,' which takes some managing. I'm sorry about being one, for your sake. But when we soldiers cuss the climate we don't suspect you-all own it like family plate. . . . Damn, how did we get onto weather? That's no way to spend our last minutes!"

"Sssh, you're raising your voice, boy. And don't speak of them as last minutes, please."

"But they are. I don't dare promise another visit. For all I know,

the ships may have upped anchor tonight. That would make me a deserter!"

"Fudge, how ridiculous! Just to say good-by to a lady?"

"You might make that clearer to a court than I could. Anyhow, these may be last minutes in another way."

She sounded suspicious, roused. "You don't mean to say this is only a—an episode? After all you've said?"

"No, no!" He paused, to select an indigo oil from his palette. "No, but twenty years ago in Barcelona a baby may have been born whose destiny is to pull a trigger at the precise moment I cross his gun sights. Ah, Rowena, his bullet might——"

"Pooh," she said, and sounded relieved. "If that's all you meant, I've heard that Spaniards can't shoot worth shucks."

He forced down misgivings. . . . This was not going well. He knew he had been drippy, but he'd underplayed his lines just right. Maybe there should have been more light so that she could see how he flared his nostrils—goldarn, most women in a boudoir under such circumstances would have been clipped sobbing to his breast by now! Instead, this one passes judgment on marksmanship as Smoky Stu would in a saloon. . . . Caleb contrived a smile and wore off on another tack.

"No matter what," he whispered, and clasped her closely, "we have this night."

"Lover—ow! Your buckle's digging me."

However, despite the digging buckle, when they separated for air she panted, and Caleb's practiced ear detected more than a cheer for oxygen. Encouraged, he tossed off his blouse and the cruel belt, and pulled open a bow at her neck when he sat again. The flouncy collar parted slackly; in the candlelight her throat glowed a warmer white than the metal of her hair. His hands shook, but Rowena smiled.

"Beautiful," he choked out, and kissed a bared shoulder.

"It is, isn't it?" she said. "And so is my back. Taking care of your carriage does wonders for the bones. Some people slouch all over, like this"—and she demonstrated—"but I've always held my shoulders back. Putting a good Staffordshire plate on the head for

exercise makes a practical reminder, but a book will do. Look, like this——”

And, rising, she showed how, branching into a reverent dissertation on the value of a daily hundred and *fifty* strokes for women with long hair who *really* care.

A little desperately Caleb said, “Yes, regal is the word that fits you. Regal. Gold and ermine.”

She sat down, sighing. “Oh, I’ve dreamed of those wonderful costumes of olden days and far places. But down South furs are too hot, and it’s a shame when they’re so setting-off. Now if I lived in the North, say, I’d——”

Caleb had an inspiration. Time was ticking by and he hadn’t progressed much farther than he had in the unbecoming carriage. If she were so simple-minded about her beauty, and if talk of dress could touch her closely, he would try a rhinestone blanket on Pegasus.

“I have a vision of you,” he said, holding her off and staring at and through her. “You are—— Stand up again, my lovely, and let me show you.”

“Your eyes look funny, Caleb. . . . All right, whatever it is, but remember Papa. What are we going to do?”

“We’re going to the opening of the season of the Symphonic Society. We’re in Philadelphia and it’s a starry fall night. You——”

“Lover-man, go along and don’t be silly!”

“You must wear a very low neckline to display—— There. So. . . . Now this is no longer a dressing gown, but a cloak to trail glory. So. . . . Ummm—here, this shawl is your ermine—it wreathes your—— No, sable would be better still on you. . . . Jus-st—so!”

“Oh, stop it, Caleb; you’re tickling!”

“Now we pass through the foyer of the Academy. Notice how the eyes follow you? Walk about, sweetheart. You tilt your head——”

“Like this?”

“Yes, fine! I wish I could hear what the women are whispering behind their fans, but this I know: they admire and hate you. Men

glance, to turn back sharply when they realize that a new Langtry or Russell has arrived. That arched neck, those shoulders, that fine bosom——”

“Do women *really* wear gowns cut this low up North, boy? If they do and it’s the fashion, I don’t mind a bit, of course, because I’m full and firm, but heavens alive!—you can almost see—almost see—— Why, you *can*!”

“A woman like you can set her own styles, beautiful Rowena!”

She was in the spirit of the play at last, he saw; her cheeks flushed and the parted mouth and widened eyes were staring at the phantom magnificence, and he was half amazed at his own talent for sorcery.

“Yes! I could!” she said. “See me there among the dressy people? In a city where there are hansoms and theaters and lights and champagne wine in those funny goblets! Take me there, lover, do!”

“I’ll take you. I dream that as I walk by your side in cabaret or opera I’d be thinking, ‘She is mine, and all the jealousy of the men is of me!’ ”

. . . It’s getting a trifle thick in here, Hawkins, he thought. Throw Pegasus a forkful of ambrosia and show the sacred nag his stall! How silly some of these affairs can get! . . .

He pulled her down to him. The enchanted cloak reverted to a dressing robe, which, unsupported by knot, bow, or hand, slipped to the floor.

“I’d admire to go to that band concert with you, Caleb. How far is Philadelphia from New York?”

“Close. We’d go there often. Give me your mouth. . . . Now do you know why I had to see you again, if for the last time, to tell you of my dreams?”

“You hush with that ‘last time’! Be careful of fever and drunken niggers and you’ll come back all right. Oh, you will come back, won’t you? You must!”

“Darling, if it’s in the cards, I’ll home to you like a bird at evening.”

Her sigh blended with the moan of the bedsprings. “I declare, lover-man,” she said, “I think you’re southern at heart. Kiss me,

yes, kiss me. You're so gallant—like Papa used to be, and—oh, Robert E. Lee! . . . Gently, sweet, gently!"

"My heart speaks the words," he whispered.

Which should have been the end of silly talk until the idle time of grace afterward, but Caleb, like a cocksure Indian, betrayed himself by a scalp cry. Flippancy in moments of exultation has undone many men.

"Besides," he said as he leaned over her, "who the hell is Robert E. Lee?"

"Lover-man, you hush now! Don't joke about——"

He nibbled an ear. "Of course—it comes—back to me! He—was the one whom—General Grant—spoke kindly of."

Not yet so affronted that a word spoken humbly could not have repaired her shock, she was not far short of indignation. She pushed at him.

"You want to spoil ev—— Do let me up a moment. Please! . . . *Let me be now, I tell you!*"

But he felt masterful, and laughed. The laugh curdled Rowena. It stung her, too, to have to *wrestle* so—so unbecomingly!

She slapped his face as smartly as she might have slammed the door on a brassy book salesman, and scrambled to her feet when his grip loosened. He could only gape as she gathered her nightgown about her and pointed a furious finger at the window.

"Out, sir!" she said.

"What in thunder is jabbing you now?"

"Thank you for preventing me from making a fool of myself!"

"Hey?"

"If you know the word 'gentleman,' go quietly!"

"Now look here, sweetheart, let's——"

"And don't you go sweet-talking me, either, you—damyankee!"

A lamp popped on in Caleb's mind. "Well, for Pete's sake—was that dippy little joke about Lee what blew up the storm?"

She stamped a bare foot. "I'll thank you not to mention his name again! Will you honor me by leaving, or shall I call my father?"

Well, I'll be damned, he thought, and, "If you do, I shall

scream," he mumbled. Louder he said, "Rowena dear, for heaven's sake let's be adult and——"

She marched briskly to the window and pointed out rigidly. "For the last time——"

Breaking off, she stared down into the darkness. In the hard silence a dog far off began to swear at a possum. The sound was so nocturnal that Caleb unconsciously wondered what time it was getting to be.

"The ladder is down!" Rowena said, her eyes wide.

He looked for himself. . . . Yes, the bloody thing must have canted sidewise in the sand, to topple with no more thud than a grapefruit. He was no grapefruit, however, he thought, and the drop from the sill was a longish free fall. . . .

"Well, we may have to—— Rowena, my pet, I'm damned sorry I hurt your feelings, I really am. Believe me, I love Marse Robert, and Stonewall Jackson is a favorite of mine too. So why don't we just——"

"How are you going to get down? You'll be killed! And you can't be found here!"

"Give me time. I'll sneak down the hall and stairs."

"No you won't! You'd have to pass underneath Papa's open door. Oh, what are we going to do?"

He glanced out the window and suddenly felt fed up. . . . That sand would be soft, or softer than buckshot, anyhow. Wearily he wondered how cornered jongleurs had gotten down castle walls when milords rattled miladies' bedchamber locks unexpectedly. . . .

"Bosh," he said without stress. "Mrs. Bates, before I take this plunge, don't you think I could wait until your old man snores and then slip downstairs?"

Rowena wrung her hands. "You can't tell, you can't tell! He keeps his light on anyhow, and sometimes he writes and drin—— He writes all night as it is. You'll have to get out this way somehow. I'm sorry, Caleb, but you simply have got to!"

So he did. The fall jarred him, but the roll down the little slope kept it from being a bonebreaker.

"Are you all right?"

After hesitating with a reply ready, Caleb walked away in the silken night as the whisper was repeated. . . .

A fine show for a man who had ventured court-martial to come hold her hands! She and her times and places "unbecoming"! He tried to tell himself that his experience was purely comic, like that one back in January with—oh, Stretch's little piece—Susan Whats-ername, but he failed to convince his irritated listener. Up until now the Susan business had been the damndest ever, but tonight's really won the coffin with the petty-cash drawer! There had been some excuse for Susan, because she was young, green, and after all did behave like a woman, but with Bonnie Blue Flag back there, blast her, she'd held control as she wanted, relaxed it when she would, and took over as she pleased! . . .

Oh, he was decidedly ruffled, but when he found the strip of beach where Rosemary Suggs had declared that Lordy yes, she would pick him up, Caleb cursed women again. The Negress was nowhere in sight. His only consolation was that early dawn showed the transports still at anchor—at least he couldn't be shot for desertion. But as the light broke stronger he knew also that there was no chance of creeping back on the Yucatan without being seen, whether Rosemary turned up now or not.

Squaring his shoulders and dusting his knees, he sauntered to the pier. . . . Might as well push out to the tub in style. He hailed one of the naphtha launches, knowing fully that by his unauthorized presence on it he would stand indicted before the guard at the top of the boatswain's ladder. Ladders, ladders, ladders—the messy night was full of nothing but ladders! . . .

Corporal Seiffert had the guard.

"Where the hell was you at, Foureyes?"

Caleb smiled bitterly. "I had to go back for—my gloves," he said. "Present my compliments to the general and tell him we can leave any time now."

It is a matter of record that, following Trooper Hawkins's words, a new mark was posted for speed of military incarceration.

PART III

Summer: Cuba

Deus vult.

—Motto of the Crusaders.

In'sh' Allah.

—Motto of the Saracens.

*War may be an armed angel on a mission,
but she has the personal habits of the slums.*

—Rebecca Harding Davis (1860).

The benign god of battles who had the Fifth Corps in trust watched it lurch on to Cuba without more serious incident than the jettisoning of dead horses. The Spaniards had not been so lucky centuries before, when sailing against another island and after far better preparation. No storms or Don Francisco Drakes harassed America's Invincible Armada in June of '98, for the benign god smiled when he did not laugh aloud.

The convoy, paced by its slowest ship, which towed a water-loaded schooner, mushed along at three knots after an early attempt to hurry had strung the transports one to a mile over forty miles of seascape. Colonel Roosevelt was to recall in a memoir how they had "sped onward past Guantanamo Bay," but as a lover of poetry—"especially the poetry of action"—the colonel must have remembered the three-knot speed as symbolically fast. However, the conquistadors of '98 did arrive off the Cuban coast because days were sunny, nights were calm, and the ocean was as empty of Spaniards as it had been in 1491. Everyone felt just fine, if none smelled so, and though a few may have voiced anxieties, these were drowned in the ragtime beat of the bands.

"Billy Shafter's gone to sea, silver buckles on his knee," another correspondent, John Fox, muttered to Warren the night before they sighted Cape Maisí.

"Instead of paraphrasing Mother Goose, my friend," Warren

said, "why not borrow directly from the familiar language of the picnic posters? 'Come all ye to the gala fish fry and moonlight cruise.' I wonder what would happen if those Spanish destroyers cut in on us this minute?"

Fox scratched his chin. On the deck below a band had found elbowroom for its trombonists and was ragging "Slide Down the Cellar Door." Suspended soldiers were playing cards, fighting, or sleeping in grotesque attitudes on hatches, under lifeboats, and with feet in one another's faces. The lights of the *Vigilancia* wantoned across the ocean as part of the grand illumination of the convoy generally.

Fox shuddered. "Perish your thought. Let's hope the Navy can take care of any *caballeros* who try to get gay."

Both watched the approach of an escorting torpedo boat, one of those which had been racing continually among the ambling steamers like cow ponies. The snappy megaphone handling of their young skippers entertained the troops, who were happy to reply when otherwise unengaged, since the transport captains seemed to hear only when they pleased.

"Ahoy, the *Vigilancia*!"

A loungee from the 71st New York returned, "Ahoy yourself, bub. What's the ticket?"

"Who's your S.O.P.?"

"That'd be kind of tough to say," the railbird shouted. "We got a mess of them. What bastid was it you wanted?"

Annapolis never had taught that ensign that life on the ocean wave could be like this, Warren thought.

"Come off the comedy! Who's the senior officer present?"

"Oh, *that* S.O.P.! Why, I believe he's downstairs taking a snooze, so you better run along, sonny. If you rouse him he'll gut you like a flounder."

Aside from the diversion of such interservice co-operations, Warren had found little to do but play with his field outfit. He was more than ever grateful for Richard Harding Davis's advice when he compared his gear with other reporters'; although he had not been able to ship a horse for riding or packsaddle use, he had

been guided by R. H. D.'s impatience with those men who boasted of traveling light.

"Anybody can 'rough it with the best of them,'" the Gibson Man had said, "but give me the bunkie who can be comfortable when 'the best of them' are roughing it. Watch your old-time sergeants; when they go into camp every one builds a shelter and acts as though he intended to stay there the rest of his life."

Warren therefore sorted and discarded on the assumption that every man would be his own pack mule, and practiced making a bedroll with the advice of a dry-tongued corporal and to the amusement of five other reporters who shared his stateroom. He bore their gibes with a trace of Dutch smugness; not only R. H. D. but Dad, with whom Warren had camped about Lancaster County during his boyhood, would have approved. Into his blanket and poncho roll he put spare clothing, towels, housewife, shaving stick and razor, tin hurricane lamp, and a box of medicines—cholera drops, iodine, and vaseline, mainly. In his haversack, besides rations, he planned to carry an extra pair of shoes, aluminum cooking kit, vest-pocket camera, and a shabby copy of Gracian's *Art of Prudence*, which had been a last-minute purchase in Tampa. Gracian, he thought, looked like good practice for him and his Spanish phrase book and dictionary.

At his sides would hang a small safety ax and knife; around his neck a pair of binoculars he had acquired by trading a revolver to Fox. The six-shooter had annoyed Warren—in his bedroll it would be useless when needed, probably, but he felt harassed by it when it dragged at his breeches and discommoded his shirttails.

"You might need a gun to impress a native guide or a tough muleskinner," R. H. D. had cautioned, but Warren, although he bought a Smith and Wesson, doubted if he could hit anything with a revolver that he couldn't reach with the butt. In the end he got rid of it simply because he thought he looked silly—you expected to see guns on Rough Riders as you did breasts on women, but a shooting iron banging at his own hip, he felt, was as ludicrous as a Tibetan prayer wheel or a sack of faucet washers.

On the morning of the twentieth, after a week at sea, Fox called him on deck.

"Land ho, again. Pipe the *Seguranca*—where are they taking that kettle, I wonder?"

Stephen Bonsal, a correspondent who had gone with the kettle, told them later:

"We had to call on Garcia, the general and the admiral and I, because the Cuban was too rocky from having 'seasicked himself' during a shipboard visit to Sampson. By the way, it's true that old Garcia has a hole in his head—right between the eyes; he tried to kill himself to escape torture ten years ago, fired a shot under the chin that came out above, and since the top hole never has healed he keeps it plugged with cotton. Anyhow—his tatterdemalions were so glad to see us that they waded out to carry the whole party ashore on their backs, but you should have seen the expressions on the faces of those who took Shafter! Once beached, they produced a little white mule to tote him up the mountain—it was recommended for having *mucho corazón*, and Pablito needed his stout-heartedness, for his knees bent under the general.

"We four newspaper boys—Davis, Remington, and Whitney were the others—wanted to sit in on the planning of the landing, of course, but Shafter had us thrown out. However, small pitchers have wide ears and a Cuban *bohío* is not soundproof."

Bonsal rolled his tongue in his cheek and smiled. "So we—ah—overheard. Maybe the fact that we were caught eavesdropping was the reason the general ordered all reporters to remain on the transports until after the troops were landed. Dickie Davis didn't soothe the general any, either, by tackling him for his plan of battle, for the fat boy was—shall we say reticent? Shafter really blew up when Dickie protested that he was no mere reporter, but a 'descriptive writer,' and the general snapped that he'd damned well be treated precisely like the rest of us wretches. You know, from his colorful language, I suspect the general doesn't like reporters. It's a pity, too, for the old mountain puma, as some of his friends call him, is a rather decent sort. He showed real distress at the condition of the

mambis who are our allies, and had kindly words for the least of them.

"Well, the council of war decided on Daiquiri——"

Daiquiri. Not originally, as Warren and Stephen Bonsal lived to hear, a drink for people who dislike martinis, but the first army-navy beachhead.

No one slept the night before the landing. Launches scurried among the Yankee armada delivering orders: the commanding general directs that you be ready to land at dawn, every man taking a hundred cartridges and two days' rations, and every ship being left with two watchmen. . . . The C.G. directs that every man take all his ammunition, and you will leave three watchmen. . . . The C.G. has decided that every man shall take a hundred rounds, as previously directed. . . .

If the general's staff was tripping over its feet from excitement, so were the doughboys. They burrowed in the higgledy-piggledy cargoes to find entrenching tools; they tore barrels and cases to find coffee, hardtack, and sowbelly which would serve for three days' rations, and trampled over food which would not. Regimental doctors demanded to know how they were to find their field chests and put them ashore, and many decided they were above the coarse labor of their responsibility. Teamsters powwowed about the draft mules: no docks? no piers? then how for the love of—— The animals themselves, smelling trouble, whinnied and kicked in the fetid holds.

During the night mysterious fires lit the shore line and musketry crackled faintly over the surf, and some transport captains who were more concerned for their owners' ships than the dither of the Army put out to sea as far as twenty miles. One vessel, containing the Gatling guns of the furious Lieutenant Parker, managed to lose itself for the day.

In his cabin General Shafter remembered the catastrophes which had ruined the English before Havana and the French in Santo Domingo in colonial times, and prayed. In the dank brig of the *Yucatan*, Trooper Hawkins and his fellow prisoners cursed the galloping rats and wondered what day it was.

Warren Spangler cat-napped through the noisy night as best he could, after packing his horseshoe roll. That he must not go ashore until permitted bothered him as little as it did most of the correspondents; his worry rather was how to hitch a ride on some navy pinnace or press yacht, and he decided that if all other means failed he would swim, and pick up his gear later.

When he mounted to the boat deck he saw that, if the order regarding the reporters was being treated lightly, so was the one requiring the brigades to land at dawn. Day was full and clear over the Sierra Maestra behind Daiquiri before the first landing craft were manned. The village which had flamed in the night still smoked sullenly, a train of ore gondolas blazed near a factory someone said belonged to the Spanish-American Iron Company, but of human life ashore Warren saw none. On the crest of a peak to the right of the partly burned town he espied a military blockhouse, but through his binoculars he could detect no movements there, either; the flagpole was bare, and the fort seemed as subdued as the huts along the cove.

At about eight o'clock, when he got hungry and mooched hot coffee and cold beans from a Seventyfirst sergeant, Warren watched naval boats taking the first troops from the *Seguranca* while he munched. The highest powers within the Naval Department had told the Secretary of War that its sailors must not "be fatigued by the labor incident to landing," but subordinate commanders who had not been informed that they were to be churlish had promised facilities to the commanding general, who therefore troubled to tow only two barges of his own, losing one on the way. However fatiguing landing might be for the sailors, the soldiers' spirits were high, Warren noted, for they leaped into the dangerously bobbing boats with Halloween shrieks, mindless of breaks or sprains, and laughed fit to split when some tanglefoot fell overboard. Steam launches stood in close to tow files of boats shoreward, while others puffed out over the horizon to hunt the most prudent of the transport masters.

The troops' eager stomachs turned when the boats in which they bounced remained motionless except vertically and sideways, be-

cause the guns of the fleet opened on Daiquiri. Warren spilled beans down his chin at the first thunderclap, and watched the awful execution of bamboo shanties, convinced that no mortals could survive among the geysers of dirt, until he saw men running along the shore waving Cuban flags. The gunners of Admiral Sampson were not to be denied, however, so the Cubans dusted for cover until the fireworks should peter out. By midmorning the gunners tired, and the small boats began to take in their seasick and deafened cargoes. Straight at the unknown shore they went, and marvelously returned unscathed during the day for more men, more men, more men . . .

Among whom was Trooper Hawkins, under full pack and a suspended court-martial. After two weeks in a lightless brig the tropical sun blinded Caleb, and Horace Bigod had to lead him to the rail by the hand.

"Throw down your stuff after I get in, Foureyes," the Indian said. "We'll fox the Noodle. If a hard look could push, you'd be overboard already."

When the towing launch cast them loose they pulled for a low wooden pier beside a high iron one. For the moment only five or six boats were discharging there, and the navy coxswain in charge of Caleb's decided to shorten his beaching time this trip, rather than to be safer and run aground.

"Anyhow, on the beach we might get tangled up with these jackasses swimming alongside," the sailor said.

"Anybody we know?" asked Horace.

"They'll raise hell with the landing—not that it's any great shakes now, but making a goddam Noah's Ark— Now look! The poor critters are shoving out to sea! What mental midget heaved them overboard, anyhow?"

"Want them in here with us, jackie?" Caleb said. "We're no cozier than a can of worms, so I guess we could make room."

"You two funny men," said the sailor, "just get me. McIntyre and Heath, I presume?"

"Hey, listen!" Horace said.

A bugle and a bell sounded from the crowded beach.

"Good stuff!" Caleb shouted. "Somebody's blowing 'Right-wheel,' and there—there's the guy with the bell! The horses know the bugle command and the mules are following the bell. Now that's discipline, hey, jackie?"

"Corking," the sailor said. "They ought to of tried it on you swabs, but maybe your ears wasn't long enough."

"Dry up, admiral. Here's the wharf," Horace said.

Unloading was tricky because the combers were playful and the pier planks were unnailed to the stringers. A team of naked men, among whom the Rough Riders recognized several friends, were plunging under the pilings to bring up lost packs and rifles.

"Two boys drowned here so far," one of the panting divers said, "so take it easy."

"You'd think the crummy engineers would have done something about this, wouldn't you?" Caleb grumbled as they picked their way over the rattling boards.

"Write them a letter," Horace said, dropping his pack in the sand and gazing about slowly. "So this is Cuba. My, I'm getting traveled."

They had not much time to stare, for their regimental color sergeant came by with the Rough Riders' own silk flag, and with the look of eye that says, "I want volunteers for a detail—you and you and you."

"You two," the sergeant said, "come here. I got a little detail from General Wheeler himself. See that blockhouse up yonder? That's where we're going—alley oop!"

"How?" asked Caleb.

Sergeant Wright looked at him with the enthusiasm of a hermit for a bath. "'How' is a word the Army uses when it lifts a shell of beer—we'll climb, you knothead! What did you think we'd do, take a funicular railroad?"

"I only asked."

"I only told you. Let's get going."

Warren, too, beat his way ashore in the late afternoon and came across a haggard Stephen Crane lying under a broken wagon and

observing the turmoil of the beach. Crane's eyes were jaundiced and bloodshot—"out of punctility to the imperial colors of Cuba," he told Warren with forced cheerfulness, but his lips twitched as he said the words.

"What in the n-name of God happened to you after you left us in Tampa, Steve?"

"Guantanamo," Crane said. "It also happened to a few marines. No sleep—all the argument at night, you see. We lay two or three to a hole in the dark and waited for guests to call. I trust you and the Army have been well?"

"Sure, but lie down. Can I g-get you some water?"

"No, thanks, Stretch." Crane smiled and added, "That was my job at Guantanamo. Gunga Din Crane . . . I came up here on a navy cruiser to have a looksee. Some shambles, isn't it?"

Up and down the shore for hundreds of yards men milled about in the sand hauling at boats, hunting their units, piling crates, drying their clothes. Some wore trousers and were bare-chested, some wore shirts and nothing else, many were stark. Rifle stacks fell over when they were left unattended, haversacks and rolls lay tumbled about among a litter of wrecked boats, tin cans, newspaper, discarded drawers, and flotsam from the fleet. Warren noticed even a crushed tuba lying half sunk at the edge of the water.

He grimaced dismay at Crane. "Reminds me of the general tidiness of a Philadelphia cat house any Monday morning," Warren said. "I'm glad I took pictures to prove I've seen what I've seen."

Missouri canaries trotted about, heehawing and enjoying being chased by sweating skimmers, and near by a burly Negro infantryman announced his intention of "cutting on" the so-and-so who'd swiped his sunburn cream. Three ulcerous Cubans among the dozens scavenging the beach took to their heels; the campaign's first lesson of proprietorship was on: that thing belongs to him who can carry it, and remains his if he sits on it.

A small boy, of all unexpected sights, and obviously white and American, ran panicked after a civilian teamster, yelling, "Hey, Spike, wait for me!" A few soldiers were sneaking drinks; with the

unerring nose common to all privates since the time of the hoplites, they had found bottles of native rotgut abandoned by the flown Spaniards. Driftwood fires crackled as other troops of Lawton and Wheeler took advantage of their chance to fry hardtack in bacon grease before they should have to move on.

Out at sea the motley fleet of side-wheelers, yachts, warships, and ocean liners fouled one another and profane tooting echoed from the cliffs.

"Stretch! What's going on up there?"

Warren swung his glasses to follow Crane's pointing finger, up the green scarp of Mount Losiltires to the blockhouse on its peak, up the walls to the flagstaff. Tiny figures on the cupola waved their hats to those below.

Within a minute everyone saw what Crane had spotted, and to use a tested stereotype, they made the welkin ring when they recognized the flag. The ocean liners roared, yacht and tug whistles piped, the warships saluted, and soldiers afloat and ashore let off their rifles while they whooped and swung their hats.

Warren felt a rasping lump rise in his throat. It was a memorably maudlin instant, and he never forgot it.

"I wonder who hoisted it?" Crane said. "We'll have to find out."

A volunteer without breeches pounded Crane's back and shouted, "I'll pledge me faith he was an Irishman!"

"Rats!" someone else said, not disagreeably. "The Irish eat——" and mentioned a waste. A fight began almost gleefully.

"Who did raise it?" voices cried.

Three Rough Riders and a reporter named Marshall looked down on the ant soldiery from the top of Losiltires and smiled.

"They like our flag, mister," Sergeant Wright said.

Marshall smiled amiably. "I guess it was better to run yours up rather than the *Journal's*," he said, and refolded Mr. Hearst's flag.

Rapid tropic darkness fell on a coast dotted with dog tents, quickly thatched huts, and campfires, and Warren walked among them marveling. When he finished his tour he brought back a

demijohn of muscatel on which Crane sucked himself to sleep. The stars came out against a jeweler's velvet sky to watch over the ships, the town, and the camp of an army whose badge was a toothbrush stuck in the cords of a campaign hat.

One by one the dice games faded, the poker players quit, and the sportsmen who were racing tarantulas crushed their captives before rolling into their blankets. Leaping nudes who had capered about the sinking fires crawled under shelter, "Frankie and Johnnie" quartets fell silent, Cubans ended their rumbas and hand clapping, and a few of Daiquiri's dogs skulked back to prowl. Only the jungle against the mountain screamed and clattered, as the jungle always had at night.

Cuba was invaded.

xvi

Two little green lizards were playing tag in the caramel-colored rafters of the house. As the personification of the New York *Journal*, Edward Marshall had been offered the place by grateful Cubans and had shared his fortune with Crane and Warren. The lizards, as well as a sluggish rat snake and various insects, went with the house, an unsheathed affair resembling a type of low vertebrate which wears the skeleton outside.

Stephen Crane took a second look at the lizards to be sure they were genuine and finished reading Warren's account of the landing.

"I should say that's a rattling good job," he said, handing it back.

Praise from such a source was silver bells and sweet milk to Warren, but he frowned and pretended dissatisfaction.

"Maybe I ought to tighten it up more, so that it won't rattle quite so much."

Crane began to stuff a bulldog pipe but declined further comment. He was essentially a retiring man whose kindness often tripped up his preference for let-be's-best; it had been bad enough

not to be able to refuse to read the work of a freshman professional who doubtless would be sensitive if the truth had to be rubefacient, but Crane's head ached besides. The wine of the night before had drugged him into a sleep which was welcome despite the dreams, but its sedative sweetness cloyed him now. He took the pipe out of his mouth unlighted, looked at it, and thrust it abruptly back into a torn pocket. He decided that watching the lizards might be less disturbing.

"Frisky devils—I wonder what they're called?" he said.

Warren's mind was worlds away from natural history. "I don't know. Say, Steve, I wonder if the *Dauntless* or one of the other A.P. boats might still be down at the cove? I'd like to send this off before we follow the Army. Ed Marshall's been gone to Siboney since sunrise, and we'd better——"

"Why didn't you go with him?"

"W-well, y-you know, I——"

Crane smiled. "Thanks, Stretch. But all I needed was a good night's sleep."

"Bushwa—you ought to see yourself! Sweating, cold to the touch, and a skin the color of a week-dead mackerel. You've got a calen-ture. Steve, we ought to have horses—you can't traipse after the Army afoot, and that's that. Do you ride?"

Crane was a superb horseman, but he said merely, "Some. Go find the tug," and closed his eyes on a wave of nausea.

The tall young man with the hot story in his hand which he felt would not keep went out into the heat waving up from the squalid little street with the smell of an opened tomb. He hurried to the airier beach to find most of the grand armada gone, and most of the campers of the night before. . . . It was magical, he thought: all that commotion just a few hours before of which little was left but scattered trash. You almost expected to see whitewings appear with collecting cans and brooms, and jabbers to pick up gum wrappers, as they did after a Sunday-school outing in Fairmount Park. . . . But Lawton's men were gone to Siboney, a few miles westward, to secure it for the landing of the main body, and Wheeler's casualties had followed.

Only a few companies of volunteers and quartermasters remained, and some vessels designated to unload at Daiquiri. Warren scanned the sea for the tug he hoped would carry his dispatch to the cables at Jamaica; the shimmering water made his head ache, and he found he was walking more slowly than usual. The woolen abdominal bandage a doctor had recommended for the prevention of dysentery itched him ferociously, and between spells of mild vertigo he wondered what the symptoms of sunstroke were, so that he did not notice the Cuban fishing at the wooden pier where two men had drowned the day before.

The fisherman himself was intently hauling in a wet cartridge belt, but when he had spread it to dry among the rest of his catch—mess kits, blankets, shelter halves—he doffed his broad straw hat graciously.

“Buenas días, señor. You are looking for somebodies, maybe?”

Warren took him in with a fretful glance: a stocky black man wearing a grin, a conical hat, and a pair of diseased canvas pants. No, Warren said, he was not looking for anybody, but for a tug-boat with a banner around its wheelhouse that said “The Associated Press.” Until the Cuban answered, Warren did not realize that he had presumed both literacy and a knowledge of printed English of a Negro beachcomber, but the other said:

“You ask the O.K. guy, señor. Tomás Quemaduras, he read the American talk if he’s not much hard. Tomás, he’s live in New York, you catch?”

“No,” Warren said, interested, “I didn’t catch.”

Tomás shrugged and spread his hands. “Pero sí, on the square, no kidding. Tomás, he is dandy plug-ugly. Work on docks—Pier Sixteen, North River. He plenty smart.”

The accent, Warren thought, never could be reduced to lino-type; plug-ugly, which he hoped Tomás was not, could only be approximated and never caught by “ploog-ooglée.”

“Is that so? Well, did you see the boat with the Associated Press sign?”

“These kind word like Ass Press, she’s hard. *Por favor*, write her on the dirt.”

Warren did so. Tomás's glistening face screwed about and studied the block letters upside down after he had failed to recognize them right side up.

"No see him. No Ass Press boat here."

The finality convinced Warren the man knew what he was talking about, so he was discouraged, and his disappointment was not lost on the quondam "seet-ee-zen" of New York. Tomás scratched himself simultaneously in three places—his wool with one hand, his crotch with the other, and his left calf with the arch of the right foot—and for further proof of versatility found wit to remark:

"This Ass Press, she's warship maybe you jump her? How you say—desert?"

"Not that, no."

"Ah, you are then maybe soldier that desert?"

"No, I'm a—a"—Warren thumbed his phrase book—"a *jornalista*."

Tomás was unconvinced but polite as hell, Warren saw. "Ah so, a *jornalista*. But if the señor are soldier running away, Tomás he understand. *Muy mucho!* He desert Cuban Army one time, Tomás. Not so good, the Cuban Army—not like work on docks in New York City, ay! You know this New York City, señor?"

"Yes. Do you know Philadelphia?"

"Ah, Phil-lee!" the beachcomber shouted happily, opening a maw like a crocodile's. "He joke you make! No such place, Phil-lee—you tell joke like funny fellow in New York *teatro de variedades!*"

"Have it your own way," Warren said.

Thought of the missing *Dauntless* sobered him. It began to look as though writing about the campaign might be easier than forwarding the stories. If communication were this uncertain now, when the Army moved inland how would he send them to a Kingston-bound boat? When he had considered the means beforehand, it had not seemed difficult; but now he was chagrined to remember that he'd half expected something like Western Union messengers to run errands in Cuba. Some of the correspondents, he knew, were going to entrust their writings to obliging teamsters

and army officers bound for depot areas—Siboney would be the first; others were working in partnerships if, unlike the big dailies' men, they alone represented their papers. Crane had not suggested a working arrangement, and had come down with some vomito besides.

"*Gracias*, anyhow," he told Tomás, and started away.

"Wait, señor, wait! Maybe you hire *asistente*, no?"

Warren pulled at his ear and wondered why he hadn't thought of it himself. Fox, Davis, and Bonsal had related tales of servants who had been invaluable—if scamps—whom they'd had in Greece or China or wherever, and surely R. H. D. would find himself an *asistente* in Cuba as ordinarily as he would shave.

"Who do you recommend?" Warren said, baiting the self-testimonial.

The Cuban drew himself up, looked Warren squarely in the collarbone, and gripped the sand with his long toes. He slapped his bare chest.

"Me, Tomás Benjaminito Hilario Quemaduras! He is New York fellow, he tell you already, but you forget. Me—sharp kid."

"I'll work the rest of those pants off you."

"*Nada, nada!* Tomás work on Cuban Army *salinas* for to punish him—*Jesús mio*, she is re-al work, those places! He work for you good to please, cheap. He cook, he make camp, he wash, he steal, he sing good too. O.K., boss?"

"Well, I don't know about the singing, but I'll try you awhile. Let's go—I've got to get going."

"Boss, you very smart fellow."

The squat man turned and whistled shrilly between broken front teeth, and stopped Warren dead. At the signal two hairy faces rose slowly from behind an overturned ore car; dark, dirty, and spread-eared, both were. One was a donkey's, but the other was a man's, the ugliest human being Warren ever had seen apart from the race of city editors.

"*Jorge! Quesí!*" Tomás screamed, beckoning sharply. "*Animense! Hump yourselves!*"

"What in the world——" Warren said.

The shaggy pair approached with no especial hump or dash that he could notice, but Tomás swept a hand toward them proudly.

"Jorge and Quesí, friends of me. So, friends of you." To the two he said succinctly, "El Boss."

"Now look here——" Warren began.

Tomás raised a forefinger, checking him. "El Boss not worry about these people, no more like pieces of wood. Tomás are pay from you, so are pay Jorge and Quesí—same time, same thing. Big bargain."

"Tomás, I can't allow it! I'm already wondering how I'm going to feed you alone."

"Boss, soldier camp he have grub?"

"Sure."

"They got to sleep sometimes, no?"

"Certainly, but——"

"O.K.—we eat," said Tomás, and that was an end to it.

On the way back to the shanty where he had left Crane, Warren discovered that Jorge was a mute. Somehow he had expected that a creature who looked so much like the Wild Man of Borneo he'd seen in circus cages would be dumb, but when he heard how Jorge had come by his trouble Warren was horrified.

"Jorge no talk when Espanish *capitán* ask questions," Tomás said, "so Espanish soldier he cut the tongue of him. They think, 'He no talk when must talk, no talk never!'"

"Good God!"

Tomás shrugged wearily. "Espanish officer he's estupid. Jorge, he never talk much smart, anyhow. He like New York fellow say—cuckoo, sí?" Tomás twirled a finger at his temple in the international gesture. "But Quesí and me, they love him. He strong, and he never lie."

Warren fought down a desire to run, saying idiotically, "She's a nice little girl. I wish I had an apple for her."

"She not know the apple, but she smarter as Jorge, anyhow. They sleep same bed, eat same things—only Jorge, he like meat. Also they talk."

"Now, really, Tomás!"

"Show El Boss, Jorge," Tomás said.

The *Pithecanthropus erectus* grinned and began to utter gobbles. The donkey canted an ear attentively and snorted when the mute had finished, after which she moved close to Warren, dropped a curtsy, and returned to Jorge's side. The hairy man grinned at Warren again, rubbing the space between Quesí's ears.

"You catch?" said Tomás. "She love you now too, because Jorge, he say so."

Warren said, "I must be dreaming. I did not see *that!*"

"No dreaming," Tomás said, "but pretty soon time for siesta."

Crane was impatient to move, and wondered what was detaining his comrade. He threw his few articles into a sack, which was his method of packing, and sat smoking on the porch of the house when Warren and his retainers arrived. The pipe sagged in Crane's teeth when he saw them.

"Who the living hell——"

Warren waved his hand airily. "Friends of me. So, friends for you. And we're all hungry. This is Tomás Something Something Quemaduras——"

Tomás bowed.

"—and the other two-legged one is Jorge Astilloso."

Tomás kicked Jorge, who bowed.

"The donkey's name is Quesí."

Jorge guggled to the donkey, who curtsied.

Crane held his head. All he could say was, "Casey? Casey? As in Casey at the Bat?"

Warren struck a fist into his palm. "Steve, you're sharp! How did you guess? I didn't catch that right off. Tomás had to tell me how he found her one day—'found' is his word—and named her to spite the memory of a dock foreman on Pier Sixteen. You see, Steve—Tomás, he's O.K. fellow from New York."

Tomás said, "You bet. Sharp kid."

The bugles assembled the Rough Riders when the sun was well up. Columns already had gone up the Siboney Road, also cavalry of Young's brigade swinging along on shanks' mare, sweating their woolen shirts black and soaking the contractors' blue dye into their skins in some instances. Ahead of them still farther had marched Lawton's footsloggers, dispatched by the worried commanding general to hold Siboney for a week until he could land sufficient supplies to make a full-dress thrust at Santiago. Young's superior, General Wheeler, however, wanted his cavalry to be first to hit the enemy, those stinkards whom in excited moments the reformed Confederate confused with "the damyankees." Hence, in the teeth of Shafter's order of march, the courtly old fire-eater sent part of his division hell-bent after the doughboys to overtake and pass them.

High-echelon jealousy was unknown to Troopers Hawkins and Bigod, naturally. Caleb was damning the Army and Cuba impartially because a concourse of bugs had savaged his legs to the groin; his red bunkie was prowling the bush, crushing leaves and sniffing until he found a mess of herbs likely to do the sufferer some good. Horace had struck their shelter, unshipped blanket hammocks from trees, and packed when the orders came to move, but they waited under pack in the sun for some time without moving until another order was relayed: "Fall out, but stay put, hear?"

That's the way things went in the Army, the westerners thought. You always was lined up in a jack-rabbit hurry to stand and wait till the officers asked one another what the hell you was lined up for. This time, though, the delay was horse trouble; the officers didn't have mounts to go around, or something, or something, and our Teddy was roaring his saddle was missing. Finally a newspaper feller gives him one he hadn't no more use for than a corset nor a pipe organ. And, pack mules being scarcer than shepherders in paradise, Colonel Wood's fine Kentucky mare got herself

hung around with cook pots. The donks, who could pull anything that was loose at both ends, had all they could do to tote the machine guns and ammunition; one also fetched along Doc Church's iodine and castor oil, 'peared like.

The nine-mile march to Siboney lasted until ten at night, and for men more used to horseback than trudging it was a killer. For Caleb the misery was measureless by space and time; besides his fiery crotch, he had added two blisters to entertain him and had aggravated a cut by a clamshell on the sole of the other foot. The cut had been made the night before; under the sorcery of rum and the moon, he too had joined the rigadoons on the beach.

"You were awful beautiful and white," Trooper Bigod said as he patted fresh clay poultices at Siboney, "but I saw prettier once at a belly show in Harrisburg. Girls *they* were, and nice and fat. Roll over and smear on this goo. I put coconut milk in it; if it works I'll take out a patent and make a million."

Caleb moaned and buttered himself. Horace lay on his back and pipe-dreamed briefly.

"Yes, a million, the way white men go for salves and physics. I can read the label now: Chief Two Strikes's Old Indian Formula for Bites, Piles, and Tetters. Effective also for the Botts, Female Weakness, and Scratches on Furniture. Why, that's sure-shot!"

It rained later, as it had the first night and would every night, and things crept and crawled and fell in with Caleb to get sociably dry. Searchlights from the warships lit the busy shore where landings went on all night, men shouted, the jungle sassed back, and everything that could clink or clatter clinked and clattered while Caleb lay broad awake, hating Horace for being able to sleep.

The bugles blew earlier in the morning than they had at Daiquiri; I-can't-get-'em-up was followed quickly by come-and-get-your-quinine, but soupy-soupy was skipped for the sufficient reason that every man was his own cookee. In the dark before dawn, revolver butts crushed coffee beans, bacon sizzled, and the Rough Riders breakfasted alfresco among the deserted mining shacks of Siboney. Caleb recalled broiled kidneys and eggs Benedict at the Bingham House back home and pounded his thumb while cracking his coffee. Horace shook his head and clucked at him.

"You're just going to save the Spaniards the bother of you, aren't you, brother?"

Just before tropic dawn broke like an egg Lieutenant Colonel Roosevelt held a council of war, a quite democratic one, Caleb noticed, because it included two civilians, a Cuban, and a few private soldiers identifiable in the shadows by their stripeless pants. The confab ended in a round of saluting, and the colonel took off, tripping over the saber dangling under his long yellow slicker, and Captain Capron called for Sergeant Chisholm and Corporal Seiffert.

The Noodle came back to his squad rubbing his hands and announced rather pompously, "When we move out, L will lead off and this here squad'll do the honors at point." The satisfaction he oozed did not, however, blind the Noodle to his duty of swiping Tex Kingsland across the soles for not waking up when spoken to.

Others of the squad contained their enthusiasm well also. "How did you work that there honor, Corporal?" Trooper Woodruff said, rubbing his carbine with a shirttail and spitting over his shoulder.

"You——" the Noodle began, but changed his mind. "Listen now, you farmers, because I ain't going to repeat. There are plenty dagos up four, five miles ahead near a place called Sevilla. The Cubans run into them yesterday and bounced off—gimme your attention, Hawkins, goddammit—I ain't talking just to save breaking wind! So, we may be the first to hit them, and I want every man to keep his eyes open and mouth shut. Squadrons of the First and Tenth will parallel us on our right."

His pale eyes scanned their faces. He must have seen enough tenseness to have satisfied him, for he grunted and finished briskly. "I don't want nobody throwing away their packs like they did yesterday, neither. I'll skin the ass off the first thrushfoot I see trying to—personal! Check your belts and carbines good and quick now. That's all."

They climbed a cliff behind the town to reach a trail so narrow and sunken that palmetto blades and saw grass slashed their faces. Loose rocks and vines tripped them, softer footing squelched under

their boots like fresh cow manure, land crabs the size of platters and the colors of orchids wobbled away from them through the stinking jungle mud. Birds discussed the intrusion of their forest and the horseless cavalry answered back until the morning grew so warm that they could spare breath only for grumbling.

Preceding the main body, and even ahead of the advance guard, rode Colonel Wood, Captain Capron, and two newspapermen, Marshall of the *Journal* and Richard Harding Davis of the *London Times*, *Scribner's Magazine*, and *Broadway*. They rode mules, pushing hard to reach the enemy before the regulars who had taken the easier lowland road; the pace tortured Davis's sciatica, but he gritted his teeth and suffered in silence like a sahib. Not so the column behind. They complained; in two painful miles thirty collapsed with heat prostration and castoff clothing festooned the bushes. Many of the First Volunteer Cavalry were not gentlemen.

"Rough Riders, hell! Wood's Weary Walkers, that's what we are!"

"My rupture's hanging out a yard."

"Everything I got's hanging out a yard."

"Silence in the ranks!"

"Ah, dry up!"

"Ooop—there goes Curly!"

"Them athletes up ahead are on the make for promotions, that's what."

"Shut up, I said! Just shut up!"

"If I ever catch the s.o.b. that's got wind enough to sting me with them blowballs, I'll cut his lights out!"

Captain Capron kicked his mule back past the Noodle's strung-out squad to dismount and take post with the advance guard. Some of the growling subsided; the captain's action was interpreted for meaning business up ahead. The trail now had narrowed to compress the regiment into a single file; dense undergrowth on its borders suddenly looked ominous, for no flanking patrols could work through it to warn the column of ambush.

Caleb was the getaway man for the point, just behind Horace. He had forgotten his sore feet and crotch.

"Is this it?" he whispered.

"Don't know," the Indian said, after hearing the question four times. His nostrils twitched; he seemed to be trying to smell Spaniards, Caleb thought, and was faintly dismayed at the unfamiliar look of his tentmate. He looked positively uncivilized. Caleb felt a passing gratitude that the Sioux was not sniffing for *his* blood.

Through the blunderings of muddy feet Caleb heard the clicking march of the land crabs and the strange bird cries again; a dove would call and be answered, cuckoos whistled and were answered, and Caleb noticed that the Indian squinted and peered for them, aware and suspicious—of what, he did not know. Caleb started when Horace suddenly ran forward to the head of the file, and tingled apprehensively when Seiffert raised a hand to halt the point. The Indian and the old Indian-fighter together examined a strand of barbed wire which Horace had seen. The Spaniards were great on the stuff; *trochas* of wire ran the boundaries of Cuba's provinces, and also penned unreliable natives into the hideous *campos de reconcentración*, or enclosed the fat sugar plantations which the jungle had reclaimed during nine years of revolt.

This wire was cut—newly cut—and the doves mourned louder on all sides. . . .

Through Caleb's mind beat thoughts of fear and thirst, but he struggled with them. . . . Colonel Roosevelt had two shovels tied to his saddlebow—now, why? . . . A palm had pushed up and through the roof of an abandoned house off right, as nice as you please. . . . Frozen top milk pushes the caps off bottles. . . . Here was another of the spectacular trees with the masses of scarlet flowers, and leaves like the locusts back home, sweet home. . . .

The green tangle now arched completely over the patrol's heads, and Horace jogged back down through the hot shadow, muttering to every man as he passed. They looked at the magazines of their carbines.

"Dead Cuban up ahead," he said, dropping to a walk beside Caleb. "Not one of our scouts—been had at overnight by varmints. Go tell the captain."

But Capron had come up from the advance guard to investi-

gate the halt. Perspiration seemed to drip even off the points of his blond mustache, and his tunic was glued to his back, but Caleb was cooled by his calm.

"Sir," the Noodle said, "the main body's kicking up so much noise we can't——"

"I've sent Lieutenant Thomas down the line," Capron said. "Where's the Cuban?"

"He was right there. We drug him into the bushes and——"

The shooting interrupted Corporal Seiffert. It began with one trifling *pow!* and a song overhead like a meadow lark's, but the six men of the United States Army who were closest in touch with Spain dived into the brush. None said a word but Trooper Woodruff, who disappeared headfirst into a patch of greenery which must have had thorns.

Caleb peeped from behind his tree. Bullets rang like ice in a pitcher when they slit through leaves; one spatulate leaf of his cover, holed dead center, bled a sticky white milk on his hand, but he saw no enemy nor the smoke of their shooting. Had it not been for the *pow-pows* and the wounded leaf and the sight of Troopers Corrigan and Colescott lying still in the path, Caleb might have suspected a practical joke like the hundreds at San Anton'.

He bounced a stone lightly off Corrigan's head, but Bigfoot did not stir. Caleb's impulse was unstudied; he thought later that he meant to warn the crazy 'breed that to try to hide from the invisible Spaniards by shoving his face into the ground was classically stupid. Bigfoot was the man who especially had been deviled by the unknown joker with the blowgun and putty balls from earliest training days, so he surely would have jumped angrily when the pebble hit him. . . .

A shot fired almost in his ear stunned Caleb. He whirled to see Trooper Murray working the action of his Krag and staring hard in the direction of his shot. Caleb remembered his own carbine then, and fired it without aim or deliberation.

Murray said, "Hit him?"

Caleb said, "No," and Murray crawled away, but Caleb was glad

Murray had spoken to him. It reduced the minute to the proportions of a minute.

Other carbines cracked, and the sounds of bayonets and machetes hacking at lianas on either flank meant that the other troops of the regiment were coming into line with L. Caleb wondered where Horace had gone, and was annoyed with himself for wishing the Indian were close by.

"See anything, Bigod?" Sergeant Chisholm said, dropping behind a rock where the Indian lay.

Horace said nothing, but shook his head and tore off his soaked undershirt.

They fired a few rounds to tease the jungle.

"We'd all do better if we could see something," the sergeant said, looking over the rock. He fell down and said, "Well, God! I'm nicked!"

Horace looked at him without expression, but propped the man's back against the stone. He did not attempt to bandage the wound, collarbone high, which bled in bright spurts through Chisholm's fingers.

In a little while Chisholm said thickly, "No damn dago can kill —me," and died.

Horace wedged the dead man's Krag into a crack in the top of the rock butt uppermost to mark the spot; then he took the sergeant's canteen and poured what was left in it into his own, and slipped away to find another rock.

Captain Capron opened his eyes and tried to see Surgeon Church.

"Where are the machine guns? Why don't they bring up the machine guns?" he said.

His head dropped on the chest of the rangy former Princeton football player who had pickabacked him to the dressing station. Blood ran from the corners of the captain's mouth over the doctor's chest. Church put the body down, tore off his sleeves to the shoulder seams, and turned his attention to others.

Battle wounded behaved peculiarly, he thought; some raved, some prayed, others lay like death from the action of shock or drugs. But two began a fist fight and had to be parted by the medical stewards, and another, who at first the doctor thought was simply moaning in a delirious sort of way, finally swelled his voice into recognizable sound.

*"Land where my fathers died,
Land of the Pilgrims' pride,"*

he sang, and Church stopped work a moment to marvel.

One or two more men lying under the long-leaved mango tree joined the singer in another chorus, but the surgeon went back to his business until his muscular arms were red to their pits. His fingers dripped too, and a helper had to shoo the clouds of flies that settled on his face. The *rodadors* had a better time with the wounded and were able to suck until they dropped off, full of the blood of men too weak to move or strike back.

"Get ready—to move," Corporal Seiffert panted to Caleb. "We have contact—regulars. Watch—for signal."

The big man disappeared, dodging to the next tree, his belly bouncing. A spongy hole suddenly showed in the tree trunk above Caleb's head, about opposite where the corporal's red face had been seconds before, and he realized when he counted other holes that a palm was no oak and felt betrayed. He sucked at his canteen.

Murray stood up then and ran forward, crouching. Caleb hastily recapped his canteen to follow Fred's lead, feeling like a man getting himself together to flee a burning privy; if there had been a signal to advance, he had not seen or heard it. Troop L advanced in short rushes, breaking from the jungle into a hammock of tall grass where the sun dazzled them. Just behind him Caleb heard a stick hit a cushion, which after a suspended moment was followed by a thud; in the acute hushes of battle the sound of a wound and a fall sometimes carried a long way.

He saw Lieutenant Day flailing a soldier over the head with his

hat, and wondered where Capron and Thomas were; he saw Colonel Roosevelt a hundred yards left, waving a sword and padding through grass slippery as horn, with the guidons of the support troops behind him. The colonel fell, rose immediately, and threw away his scabbard with an irritation plain even at a distance, and the thin line behind the guidons, drunkenly spaced, pursued him slowly up the slope. Brave man, brave men, Caleb thought without quite understanding that he was himself an extension of their ragged line.

The enemy was firing rolling volleys which hissed through the hip-high grass, miraculously over or short. Caleb jerked his last—his second—shot of the fight at a building on the hill which looked like a factory, to help the brave men. Then he applied himself to the more important task of plowing uphill through the scorched para grass, a task tough enough in itself, he felt unthinkingly, without wasting energy on aiming and shooting a gun. . . .

The Spaniards said later that they felt secure in their distillery building and *trincheras*, and were at first contemptuous of the dogged line of imbeciles charging them—what sort of soldiers were *bobos* who ran at one as if to clutch with the bare hands? But the imbeciles came on, which was disquieting. *Cristo mío, que modo raro de atacar!* The dons were pleased when orders came to withdraw, and did so in excellent order, taking all their wounded and—they said—a captured officer's cape "with metal button with eagle."

During the charge Caleb was joined for a time by a handsome civilian in laced boots and a state of exaltation, whom he recognized from pictures as Richard Harding Davis. The writer had a carbine, was directing soldiers, and occasionally falling—from his sciatica, which of course the men did not know about—and Caleb remembered quite casually that he had read somewhere in law that newspaper reporters were forbidden to shoot soldiers, even enemy soldiers. R. H. D. was no ordinary reporter, apparently, and hadn't heard about the closed season, Caleb thought, laughing when the combative noncombatant let ding with his Krag again.

He lost sight of Davis when his attention was caught by a few

men in blue and white running from the ruined factory. Spaniards! The Enemy that had been a headline, a table topic, a creature out of Bulfinch—visible and alive!

He saw two dead ones on the crest, their uniforms and cockades smeared with blackened blood, who repelled him nearly as much as Horace Bigod, whom he came upon too. Horace was in every sense literal and figurative a bloody mess: his eyes were black agate, his skin glistened and smelled as sharply as urine, and he was dabbled from face to shins with blood in all stages of freshness, possibly from a gash like a grinning mouth on one biceps. His uniform was a metal identity tag and a shred of drawers.

"Horace! For the love of God! Horace!"

The Indian wasted a glance on him, but went on shooting at the retreating Spaniards, squatting like a potter in the shallow clay trench. Caleb tugged at his unwounded arm, but Horace brushed him away with a show of teeth.

A trooper of the Tenth, his brown face rich with sweat and curiosity, came to a sliding stop on his back beside them, after vaulting over the parados and losing his footing among the empty yellow cartridge cases of the Spaniards.

"Say, man," the regular said, "is you an Indian?"

Caleb wanted to tell the Negro to go away but was too interested himself to hear what Horace might say. However, he said nothing. He threw back his head and gave a barking cry.

"I wins!" the colored trooper yelled, jumping back out of the trench. "I wins, Jackson—he's a redskin! Don't you go a-getting yourself killed before you pays up, you hear?"

Caleb took his first-aid kit from a breast pocket, tore it, and hurriedly studied the diagrams to find out how to bandage an upper arm, which he abruptly realized was a slightly silly thing to be learning as late as now.

"Take a breather while I plug you up," he told the bleeder.

Horace snarled. Caleb hit him deftly on the point of the jaw to save words, and then wrapped the arm without trouble. . . . It was the least he could do for a fellow who had gone to so much trouble for him in his miseries.

When the "energetic little skirmish" was done, the battle-pitched strength of the Rough Riders faded fast. They camped for the night on the battlefield itself, after the best ancient traditions, and despite their general torpor a few found energy to whittle their names on the trees which gave the locality its name. . . . *Las guásimas* are thorny, their nuts make good pig fodder, and their low, but not too low, branches are fine for gallows.

At about noon the next day the regiment buried its dead in a common grave along the trail where the fight had begun. They spread the bottom of the trench with palm fronds, sang "Rock of Ages," and listened to an Episcopal chaplain pray, after which they went away.

Caleb took along a footling souvenir of the burial service which in later years reminded him powerfully of the vultures overhead, and of the numbered markers he had helped make from cartridge-box lids.

A little tin tube fell from Trooper Colescott's pocket when they lowered him into the trench beside his tentmate, Bigfoot Corrigan. Nearly everyone else in the squad except Bigfoot knew that Colescott had brought the puttyblower to Cuba from San Antonio; no one told Bigfoot, however, who was forever stinging him, because Bigfoot was the kind of man whose rages were entertaining. Caleb covered the faces of the stinger and the stung, and took away the shiny tube, thinking that Bigfoot damn well might resent having to spend eternity with both Black Bill Colescott and his bean blower. This was foolish of Caleb, but then he was very, very tired.

xviii

A pink moon rose over the castle wall of mountain behind Siboney and surprised Warren mildly, for during the past sixty hours he had forgotten that moons rose.

"Hello, friend moon," he said, "I'm glad to see you," and then he tumbled down the black chute which is the sleep of exhaustion.

Crane had an intuition that action impended Friday, and had spurred the party—including Casey, who resented haste—on the track of Young's skeleton brigade of Wheeler's cavalry. Young was a regular, and so were most of his men, and Crane preferred to follow professionals when he smelled promise of a fight; farm boys and plumbers' apprentices getting their red badges of courage not only sickened him but bored him, in his own professional role of reporter. He told Warren he expected Young's tough nuts to "conduct themselves without that sense of excellence which spoils excellence," too, for he mistrusted the Rough Riders—or that group of them who were dudes. "They have plenty of publicity as it is, anyway, and that is their fortune and curse. Give me Young's pork-and-beaners."

So he and Warren left their traps at Siboney in charge of Tomás and were up for the opening of the regulars' battle on the right of the Rough Riders, and from the first cannonading by the general's Hotchkiss guns until the rising of the pink moon, time hung in space for Warren. He ran on the heels of the demoniac Crane, and two and a half days later was able to write an account of what he had seen, but he needed the rising of the moon to recall him to earth. To help him recall such times when he had not watched men die under a bright sky in a struggle for a moldering distillery; when the capsheaf of a man's hopes was more than a desire for a can of warm tomatoes or a chew of tobacco; when a caroling trill on a hillside meant a song sparrow and not a German-made bullet; and when a Negro was a fellow in spats who carried a brass watch along Lombard Street on Saturday night, and not a human being who tried to hold in his guts with his hands. . . . The memory of the colored trooper never left Warren. Never before in his life had he touched a black man except to give one a tip or a worn-out suit, yet one had bled to death on him, which was—wasn't it?—about as intimate as a man could get. The trooper of the Tenth had stunk as badly, choked on water from Warren's canteen, and collapsed as limply as the white boys of the First.

Nor did Warren forget the gray lips of Edward Marshall as he lay at Siboney after the fight. Ed had been shot through the spine

and though in torture when not unconscious, he had written a story of the "ambush"—as even Richard Harding Davis called it then—for his paper. Now why had he? Was it real excellence, "sense of excellence," simple working habit, or a combination of all, which gave Ed his cold courage? Warren could not conceive of himself being equal to Marshall under similar circumstances.

He had worked with Crane all of Friday night helping wounded men down the mountain, and plugged at it through Saturday and Sunday until his limbs lost the buzz of simple fatigue and became nerveless as wood. Oh, he and Steve hadn't done it all—there were soldiers winged in the arm who managed to bear up those who limped, and a handful of hard-worked men with crosses on their uniform sleeves had handled the litter cases, without litters. Without litters, because when General Wheeler had seized what strategists call The Initiative there were no hospital supplies ashore except for the field packs of the medical stewards and the first-aid kits of the troops themselves. Two days after the fight Miss Barton's Red Cross ship anchored, but her offer of assistance was rejected by a doctor who hooted at the presumption of women doing a man's job, nursing. . . .

Just before the moon came up Sunday night Crane had said, as if he were reading the words from a scroll in their campfire:

"War is death, and the plague of the lack of a thousand small things. And toil, much toil."

Without looking, he had pointed toward the dirty shack off the beach which had been the depot for most of their labor.

Warren nodded, and his head felt counterweighted, like the ones on the toy ducks and giraffes he had given his small nieces for Christmas.

"Yes. Work, sore feet, heartburn, no sleep, and no mail."

But there was mail on the rotting porch of the house at which Crane had pointed. Over the door a sign said, "U. S. Post Office, Military Sta. No. 1," and the veranda was full of blue-striped gray sacks; indeed, there was a fat and cheery postmaster named Brewer asleep inside and incubating the yellow fever which would claim him among the first victims. His post office was an eldritch

place that night, for shapes came and went, elongated by sputtering torches they carried, and groans escaped from the faintly glowing windows downstairs. There also were mutterings, thumps, and screams, because U. S. Post Office, Military Sta. No. 1, was a make-shift surgery.

On the mailbags men lay in attitudes of birth and death, sleeping. Those also wounded who could not sleep or lie down sat on the filthy floors or in the few chairs. In one room surgeons sawed and stitched by the light of a big glass jar a Cuban had half filled with cucujos, the local fireflies, and at intervals got more illumination from torches held by orderlies who brought in men for the spattered tables. When a man on a table shrieked, the sleepless ones outside moved their own racked bodies to ease his agony. There were many quiet moments in U. S. Post Office, Military Sta. No. 1, however, during which men who were weeping could be heard, and some were ashamed.

None of the suffering bothered Warren after he slid down the black chute, but while he slept, a soldier lying on one of the mailbags hemorrhaged. The warm gush soaked through the coarse canvas slowly, staining letters addressed to Pvt. Asa W. McDonald from Bearing Cross, Arkansas, and to Pvt. William Murphy from a judge in Indian Territory, and to a woman, Mrs. J. Addison Porter of the Red Cross ship, *State of Texas*. The blood cooled on a fourth envelope, too, and made its superscription illegible. The letter inside read:

Sunday

My dear Warren:

Well, what I have to tell may sound silly down there in the middle of a war, but my goodness, I'm fit to burst, I'm so mad! You see, this afternoon I went with Hattie Bomberger and our crowd to Willow Grove. We'd planned a dandy outing and even managed to arrange for space on a cool summer trolley car that had been mostly chartered for a picnic by a Young Businessmen's Bible Class. Of course we didn't plan the young businessmen, but we felt Bible students made everything hunky-dory. Well, it wasn't!

So, things started fine; we rode out to the Park singing "Ta-Ra-

Ra-Boom-De-Ay" and real crazy stuff like "Nero, My Dog, Has Fleas," you know, and when we got there the young men invited us to play dodge ball, and it was quite spirited, that game, because Bertha Tinker got a black eye. (Remember her?—the tall girl with the heavy limbs. Not Ella Tinker—she's her sister. You know, the one with all the red hair.)

Now I must interrupt myself and tell you about the new bathing dress I made, so you can understand how vexing matters became. I sent for a pattern from the Bazaar for a sweet blue dress trimmed with red braid, and with puffed sleeves and ruffles—really very trig, but the pattern called for duck cloth and because of this old war I couldn't get any, so I bought a few yards of guaranteed pre-shrunk woolen goods. Well, I'll bet you're guessing some of what happened, but not all, my goodness!

We splashed one another in the pool, came out and played prisoner's base, to dry off before eating the lunches we'd brought. I got so excited and everything that I didn't notice any shrinkage—I really didn't!—but somebody who ought to have been paying more attention to prisoner's base noticed. He called a policeman, and do you know what? I got **ARRESTED!!!** Me!

The contemptible cad! Why, he hadn't even the manliness to tell me, or have a girl friend tell me, that my knees were beginning to show! Oh, Warren, it was awful—people looking on, and everything! The policeman was kind, but he made me wade out into the pool up to my waist until Hattie fetched a mackintosh, and he severely called down a nasty masher who passed an uncalled-for remark on our way to the dressing room. I burned all over, I was so mortified, and—the shame of it!—a reporter got my name from Bertha for the papers! I could snatch her bald, I really could!

Well, Hattie told me the Chicago Marine Band played the "Anvil Chorus" with a clever electric anvil afterward, but I didn't hear it. I was thinking. The policeman told me after I'd dressed who had tattled. I was amazed, for naturally I had expected it was the officer's idea, he being an officer. The more I wooled over the business, the madder I got. Since when did some wretch in the paint-and-varnish business presume to judge my modesty! I sat under the trees and the band played and it was cool and shady, but in plain language, I perspired. So at intermission, when we girls went for apples on sticks, I went for that Bible class president and

asked why he had blabbed. "It was my duty," he said. "Duty your long nose," I said; "How dared you?" "Because I reverence womanhood," he said, "and I was embarrassed for you." "For me?" I said. "For me!"

I'm ashamed of myself tonight for kicking that nasty man, but I know you'll be laughing by now, which is what I guess I should have done. I hauled back and kicked that whited sepulcher right in the seat of his ice-cream pants. It wasn't ladylike, but I did what I could.

Something dawned on me while I thought about getting named as a lewd female. Me! A brazen woman flaunts herself, but—then, bing! I knew for sure what was disgusting about me was entirely in the mind of that man. His bad breath was blowing back into his own face, to be plain about it. I told him so. Hattie says she never heard such a speech in her life, but I don't remember much. She also says I stuck my candied apple in his hair, which curdles me!

Tonight I feel drained. I won't write much more, so I'll pick up again tomorrow and make this a real big, fat letter like you want. Since I got home I've recalled some of the arguments we used to have about what's decent in books and behavior and so forth. You were right—never say that a woman can't admit she was wrong. Not that you ever were fair, or exactly right. Gus is sitting here grinning as I write. You know Gus!

Good night, my darling. Remember you asked for personalities!

Tuesday

I thought I'd write yesterday, something amusing after that affair Sunday, but a dreadful thing happened at the Arsenal and left me a wreck. Hattie Bomberger lost the fingers of her right hand in an explosion, and today they had to cut off the whole hand. Oh God, Warren, it's bad enough when it's a man, but she's a woman and was pretty! A tray of primers blew up while she was loading them—the weather has been fierce all summer so far—but no one knows how it went off, or why her other hand escaped. Maybe she was pushing her hair back, or something, but whatever it escaped we can thank the Lord!

I was in the weighing room when I heard the explosion, and my heart froze. I used to tremble over the thought of explosions, but when months went by without any, I forgot. I'm calm now as

I write this, but still cry a little. It was terrible, and she was my best friend. I was so shocked when I saw her that I had to pinch myself to know I was there, and that this was Hattie Bomberger and I knew her very well. Does that sound silly, Warren? I ran in and she was sitting at that smoking steel table and staring at those ugly red stumps of her fingers. The foreman told me later that she didn't feel pain at first, or hear him tell her to lie down until the stretcher came. Lieutenant Ruggles was passing in the hall when the blast went off, and he fixed a tourniquet on her arm and shouted for the other women to stop their racket, but Hattie didn't seem to feel him twist the knot, or know anybody was in the room. She just kept looking at her awful hand. Finally she said, "No. No." Just like that, Warren, in a little voice—"No. No. This can't be." Then I made a noise too. I cried out because I knew it was, and my heart broke.

Afterward she screamed a long time. She didn't faint, but Mrs. McTavish, Nell Archibald, and Mike Koslow, the plumber, did. I forgot to. I stood there even when they carried her out, and couldn't go to her or say a word. Over and over I heard her say, "No. No. This can't be," and saw her holding her hand away from her smock—to keep from bleeding on it, I guess, because Hattie always was as neat as a pin.

We went to work after they took her to the hospital; it wasn't until I went home and had hysterics that I discovered how scared I was, and it wasn't until after a night without sleep that I realized what really scared me. I suddenly knew that Hattie might just as well have been me, and knew why I was so cold inside, and I cried on Ma's nightgown and soaked her shoulder before I was done.

Today the birds in the yard sang, and the guards said good morning, and the whistle blew and the machinery started, just as if nothing had happened to Hattie, but while I worked I kept remembering. You know how lightning shows things in the dark, and how they stay in your mind, even if the flash blinded you? Well, that's how I suddenly knew that just because I'm me I'm not excused from having things happen to me like they do to anybody else. Oh, Warren, this must sound stupid to you down there in the middle of God-knows-what yourself, but I had to tell you above anybody!

Ma's calling me to come drink some hot milk and go to bed. Gus told me to enclose the clippings about the anthracite miners

and the Phillies, and to say that he agrees with the opinions expressed in both—that free contract shouldn't mean the freedom to watch your family starve, and that the Phils need a new manager and new umpires.

I pray for you every night, my dear own.

Your
SUSAN

In the morning two medical stewards lifted the body of the soldier off the mailbag.

One said, "This guy sure made a mess of this sack."

The other said, "He wouldn't of if we could of looked out for everybody and gave the poor bastard a chance. Gawd, what a night!"

Some of the mail the soldier had died on had to be burned as hopelessly undeliverable. When Susan understood from later correspondence that her sweetheart had not seen that particular letter, she was inclined to let the matter pass. . . . After all, you oughtn't to bother a man who has a lot on his mind with your own five-cent troubles and discoveries.

xix

Tomás Quemaduras dubbed himself *un estudiante del mundo*, or, as Crane rendered it, "a graduate of *el colegio de Hard Knocks*." The Cuban never had heard of Balthasar Gracian, but he guided himself by principles the old Jesuit maximist might have found queerly familiar, because for Tomás a hard world had wrenched and distorted, but never crushed, a devotion to useful learning. Coarse adaptations came naturally to him, who loved life although he always was intimate with poverty, and was tranquilly certain of the malice of men. And of women.

On the latter subject Tomás deemed himself an expert. "El Boss" particularly remembered a night behind the hill of El Pozo, when his servant illuminated the quaint treacheries of womankind, and their strength, in a manner which had been shirked by the

priestly philosopher. Warren was grateful for the distraction. With Lord-knew-what blood and thunder impending when the Army should advance, Tomás's talk soothed his nerves.

"This Susana, she is very beautiful, boss." Tomás handed back a photograph by one corner. "It not fit my hand makes dirty the so beautiful face."

"She'll do."

"Por qué?"

"I mean, see, she's not an ideal beauty, but—well, she's *hermosa*, but not *muy hermosa*, heavy on the *muy*. She's not a—a——"

"*Belleza encantadora*," Crane suggested. "A witch beauty."

Tomás smiled approval with his fearful mouth. "The señor Crane, he very smart! Too beautiful woman mean witch trouble plenty, but yes!"

Warren and Crane smiled, and the latter blew tar through his pipestem. They had encouraged Tomás to talk for their amusement, but experience had gentled their condescensions. As Warren said, "A man's race, creed, or shiny pants don't necessarily bear on his manhood."

"You speak like one who knows," Crane said.

"Sí, much women, plenty trouble. He very pleasing to the women are Tomás, when he young, and have the teeths all and the good strong arm and the *virilidad fuerza*." To pantomime how *fuerza* his *virilidad* had been, Tomás made a gesture with fist and forearm that was impressive.

"'He was wild and woolly and full of fleas,' " Crane quoted, and the Cuban paused graciously to hear more. When no more came, Tomás continued.

"But now he has fortyseven years and no wife. Long time back he got not the years but plenty wives."

"All at once?" Warren asked.

"But no, boss. One by one, *ordinariamente*, and sometimes with the marriage in church. Just once he have two for same time—never three. Three wives, she too much. Two are plenty also."

"I can believe it."

"One wife she need the love and the beating with the stick,

no? So, two wives, they are need more than two times the loving, and much more than two times the beating, for to make them happy and glorify God together. Tomás knows—*Madre mía*, he knows! Women are the funny things, you catch?"

"'Love is a funny thing,'" Crane said, forming a church-and-steeple with his fingers, "'Shaped just like a lizard. Runs right up your backbone, And nibbles at your gizzard.'" "

"That's es-o! The beautiful woman, she are for the love, not for to marry. Bad for the husband of she, his gizzard. But when a young fellow he full with fire, he say, 'Now I marry myself this beautiful witch and then she forget everybodies but me.' *Qué tonto!* She never, never forget the comb for the hair, the paint for the fingers, the many sweethearts who tell her she too good for them! Much better for young fellow to marry with the ugly woman to put out the fire of him. She's more good for cook and to mend the shirt also. With ugly woman, he no worry about lovers, or maybe lover surprise him if she got one and he say, 'Well, I be damn,' huh?"

"Maybe," Warren said. "But, Tomás, why can't a pretty ankle and good cooking go together? I'm sure they can!"

"*Como usted quiera, sí,*" the Cuban said. Tomás, like Father Gracian, believed in gilding a contradiction of his superiors wherever possible.

He studied his prehensile toes for a moment before picking a tuft of grass with them to throw on the smudge fire.

"El Boss, he has hear the tale of *la reina egipciana* and *los dos generales romanos*? It a good one with sharp points."

"I don't think so. Who and who?"

"The Cleopatra—African lady, boss—and the Generals Marcos Antonio and——"

"Oh. O-oh! Why, yes, but I may have missed the sharp points. Shoot!"

"Pues, this thing she happen long ago by a great river, before come our Saviour and His gracious Mother. Marcos Antonio, he much of a man, and the Cleopatra, she beautiful—*belleza encantadora*, Señor Crane, you catch? Such things between man and

woman, they are not change by *la salvación católica*, *ay de mí*. . . . So: Antonio he bring soldiers to Africa to take this country by the great river that belong to the Cleopatra, like *el general* Shafter he taking Cuba——”

The two Americans glanced at each other, but Tomás either intended no subtlety or concealed it well under his bland basso.

“—and the queen, her soldiers they no damn good for to fight. But she a woman and she say, ‘No fierce soldiers I have, but these my dark eyes are good for many captains, and this my bosom he more good than thousand machetes, I think.’ So, you know what, boss? She fight the victory over *los romanos* by making for Marcos Antonio the battlefield in the bed!”

Crane clapped his hands. “Homeric, Tomás! I wish all history were chronicled like that!”

“*Gracias*, señor, but the end, he is sad. Antonio, he have the Julio César for boss—you hear something about this César, I think? Julio’s wait for news of the grand victory, and he wait and wait, but it not come. So Julio say, ‘Marcos, he no good for general, or he are dead also. I go see.’ So he go. The Cleopatra, she very surprise and angry with herself when she see Julio come with the ships and soldiers. ‘What? What?’ she say. ‘I think this *es-o* pretty Marcos are the big boss, but no, he are this little Julio, damn!’ You catch, boss? She’s disgust, because if the trade of *puta* pays nothing, even queens should stay *respetable*.”

“Keno!” Crane said.

“Tomás, he not the *cínico*, señor,” the Cuban said, somewhat haughtily. “He telling the fact. . . . *Pues*, now come the tragedy. The Cleopatra show her charms for the César—the handmaidens of her carry her naked and roll in a carpet to the tent of him, *para mucha sensualidad*, you catch? She’s hear this César are *frígido*—like New York fellow say, ‘cold *patata*.’ When Marcos hear of this thing, he raise the hell, *ay!* ‘Cleopatra, *sangre de mi vida*,’ he yell, ‘what this you do with the big boss, *pérfida*?’ She say, ‘Who you think you yell at? You full with dope, señor!’ He say, ‘Come! Come with me—we chase ourselves into the woods for the love, and for the safety also.’ She say, ‘No, you crazy.’ He say, ‘Yes, by

damn!' She say no, he say yes, she say no—then he's es-slap her dizzy and run. But this Julio, he are hard fellow with heart like policeman. He follow and kill the soldiers of them, and Antonio he kill very dead also. Ay de mí, there was the end to a fool who trust the beautiful witch!"

"Did she get away with it?" Warren said.

Tomás paused to listen to a sound beyond the firelight, although Warren heard nothing but the chiming snores of Jorge and the donkey. The Cuban always heard things first; if a spider stamped across a web, Tomás heard it first.

"When Julio come to her tent after he stick the head of Antonio on machete, the Cleopatra she know the jig he's up. So she puts snake, *más mala que una vípera*, on the bosom of her for the last lover she take, and the tale he's finish."

"Aw-hee, aw-hee!" came from the darkness.

"I think Casey's giving you the laugh," Warren said.

Tomás snapped a thumbnail from an upper tooth, his token of derision. "Quesí, she are a woman, no?" he grinned. "All woman she sometime laugh he-ha when she's damn mad. . . . Horse soldier was coming, boss. Is here now."

The trooper threw his reins to Tomás and squatted by the smudge fire. He was a Second Cavalry orderly from corps headquarters, but his business of the moment was no more official than to beg a smoke. When mooching failed he offered to swap a can of "rat meat" for the makings and a trade was made; although the correspondents brought in tobacco on press boats from Jamaica, maintaining food supply from day to day was a knotty problem. The Army's commissary rejected the claim of the pen for sustenance when there was not enough for the sword.

From the orderly Crane and Warren heard details which he thought would affect the Army's advance. . . . Papa Churn Butt had tooken with the gout so dum bad he could scassly sit his horse, but nevertheless Shafter had been in the saddle most of the day, and had ridden close enough to the dagos' lines to micturate on them—the trooper used a sparer word. Old Snow White Hawkins had raised holy-particular with his division chief when he was

ordered to tear up a dry camp to shove on for a measly mile, and by winning his point with Kent had won a good night's sleep for his brigade, a blessing few others were sharing right now. Fighting Joe Wheeler was in the hands of the pill rollers from bunking on the ground with men young enough to be his grandbabies, and General Young also was feeling mighty low and due to be tagged back to the States. Colonel Wood was taking Young's place tomorrow, even though he too was throwing up, and Teddy would have the Rough Riders for himself, with nobody to handicap him but the Army and Navy.

"Nobody feels snappy," finished the soldier, "and I be dog if I feel so good myself."

Yes, the humors of Cuba were beginning to affect everyone, the reporters agreed, but the soldier protested quickly that there wa'n't nothing the matter with him except being all-fired tired. He hadn't no fever! After what them missionaries had told the boys in Tampa about malaria, yaller jack, *calentura*, or whatever the damn things was, he had decided to get good and shot through the head, where it wouldn't matter so much, sooner than catch this here *vómito negro!* . . .

Warren nodded. He and Crane had discussed and condemned the scary-Marys of Tampa; their well-meant warnings had spread an unreasoned panic, a fear of disease in which all the microbic terrors of the tropics fused into one specter: yellow jack. Wear a charm about your neck and pray, bub, for all the good medicine will do. . . . Nor had the Medical Department been able to lay the horror; having been allotted a handsome twenty thousand of the fifty million dollars voted by Congress, and being warned not to spend a dime before shooting actually started, the army medics were as helpless as they were ignorant.

The Adjutant General's Office, however, had investigated and passed the word for sensible campaigning in hot countries. "It is wise to let the banana alone," the A.G.O. said. "Meals should be taken at regular hours and served warm. . . . Do the hardest work of the day between six and eleven in the morning, then eat breakfast, take a siesta, and remain quiet until 3 P.M. . . ." Equally

practical advice fortyfive years later would tell draftees that, if bitten by a snake, they should extract the venom with a breast pump. . . .

Even their ribald jokes over such stately bilge had palled on the doughboys in Cuba. Their "regular" meals were beans, bacon, and hardtack, with an occasional can of tomatoes and a chunk of pork so high that many used it to grease their rifles. Few could stomach the canned fresh beef. "It looked well, but had an odor similar to that of a dead human body after being injected with preservatives," a doctor testified. And the delicate suggestion by the A.G.O. to "avoid getting wet" seemed less than hilarious to the troops now, under the teeming daily rains.

Nor could one chaplain find it in his heart to rebuke his flock when, in the name of the All-Merciful, he was asked to lay off the sky-piloting and go fetch in something for them to smoke, if he really wanted to do something for the peace of a soldier's soul. Tobacco, like most agreeable sins, was un-American in the books of the quartermaster general—"Let 'em eat sourbelly for comfort; there's a war on."

Civilian pack trains struggled to bring up supplies for the corps and its Cuban allies, but fell behind. Eventually one skinner outfit, lately from Alaska and chosen for Cuba with a lordly contempt for bagatelles like acclimatization, was set solely to hauling cartridges. Fresh food spoiled on the transports and was jettisoned; what did not feast the fish was carried back to the mainland untouched.

For such reasons, known or suspected, fifteen thousand Americans in Cuba cursed everything connected with the Army that was a foot high and a day old, and so rested before battle. On the afternoon of June thirtieth, however, the corps lumbered into motion. Companies, regiments, and brigades trampled—simultaneously, of course—into the mud of the skinny trail to Santiago, which His Catholic Majesty's cartographers labeled a *camino real*. The invaders thought differently: the liquid mud was bloody flux, for sure, but what had been added? They halted near a sugar-loaf hill appropriately crowned by a sugar factory, but again with Spanish humor called El Pozo, "The Well." Lawton's infantry

branched northward to camp along the road to Caney, where the only fighting for the next day was scheduled; his mission was to cut Santiago's direct connection with Guantanamo and to prevent Spaniards from nipping in between Siboney and the American advance. Another force, untested Michigan and Massachusetts volunteers, was to press forward on the south and make terrifying noises before the hamlet of Aguadores.

"Who are you going to follow, Steve?" Warren asked, rolling himself into his poncho after the orderly had gone.

"I'm for the center this time, I think."

"Huh? The fighting's going to be at Caney!"

Crane stared at the stars. "They look pasted on the sky," he said. ". . . What did you say?"

"The center's just going to hole up in the woods ahead until Lawton has gathered in that little nest at Caney, so if Lawton's giving the party, why stay here? After all, it's only four or five miles back in case hell pops here."

"Well, let's just say I have a hunch, Stretch."

"How's that?"

"No one really knows what's in front—lay of the land, enemy force, or anything. And here in the center are the irrepressibles who think of battle in terms of touchdowns, sliding for bases, prize fights, or—in a deadlier sense—the pursuit of cattle rustlers."

"Now that's news—you've said you don't give a snap for the Rough Riders, but now you've switched!"

Crane laughed. "I have a bump of curiosity," he said, holding up fingers to tick off reasons. "I want to see what happens when Teddy and Company are required to sit still and wait for orders. Second, I have some gestures to make for the *World* about New York's own dear Seventyfirst, those hopeless litterers of the old campgrounds. Third, I want to watch Colonel Derby's French-silk balloon go up—I was born too late for Professor Lowe's ascensions during the late Unpleasantness Between the States. Fourth, I'm morbidly fascinated by ambush. Lawton won't be surprised—he's too smart, and besides he's bulging with eight or ten men to the enemy's one, if the Cuban spies are right. Last, I fear I could not keep

a straight face nor my temper, to watch Duffield at Aguadores. He's feinting, but feints can be vomitive and infuriating when green men slop forward to die. No, make mine the middle."

Warren pondered. Jack Fox, too, said that he would hang around general headquarters until something big broke—Shafter was planting his flag behind El Pozo, where he could maintain touch with all three wings of his army by telephone and messengers. Davis was staying put, but Bonsal was going with Lawton, he said, not because he ached to, but because he felt obligated to treat a certain staff officer's hints seriously. Warren's own official tipster suddenly had found critical business in Siboney when orders had come to move in the opposite, or shooting, direction, so Warren had not the advantage of his prudent advice.

"We-e-ell," he said, listening to shovels digging in the trail spades of the artillery on the hill, "I guess I'll try Lawton myself. Mind if I take Casey and Jorge, just on the chance I've got to hustle back here?"

"Do, by all means, Stretch. Good night and good hunting."

. . . Why tag along with Crane forever, anyhow? A fight was guaranteed at Caney, even if it were only to be a warm-up for the main event. Sometimes gazabos like Crane, Davis, and Fox were just a touch too supercilious for his taste, Warren thought. You'd half think they'd been behind the curtain, not simply with Shafter, but with the Almighty—in spite of the fact that not a single dodgasted reporter had the confidence of the man at headquarters—nor confidence in him, either. Almost alone of the newspapermen, Bonsal seemed to sympathize with the gout-swollen, yellow-eyed tub of guts in the solar topee who was responsible to the War Department and the people of the United States, and not to the *World*, the *Journal*, or the Associated Press. Like Uncle Billy Sherman of a generation gone, Uncle Billy Shafter did not like newspapermen.

Warren shared the prejudice against the general, but Bonsal had related a story about him that afternoon which modified his opinion.

"He lay on his cot by the telephones watching his shirt dry,

and with a gunny sack on one foot instead of a shoe. Orderlies ran in and out, and generals came storming with generals' complaints about one another. I couldn't see the picture of rear-area ease some of the boys sneer about, not in that squalid tent, nor in the malaria that burned in the fat man's eyes. He'd just had word that his second-in-command was out of action and that enemy reinforcements were on the way to Santiago. Garcia was begging for more provisions for his well-starved army, while the Swedish attachés had demanded to know when they were going to get ice.

"The only ice on hand was in the tones of a couple of correspondents pitching their opinions on mismanagement to carry to the general's ears. Oh, sure, it worked! It got his goat and he had them thrown out, but do you know what he told my favorite colonel afterward? Well, when his rage passed, Shafter turned to him and said, 'They wish to instruct me in my military duties, Colonel, but I cannot bank on their intuitions. Theirs is the privilege of criticism, mine is the responsibility of command. If only they knew how hard it is to give the go-ahead when you know human life is to be sacrificed!'

"Then, so help me Hannah, the general fished a wad of press clippings from his field desk, dating back to Tampa, and apparently selected for their abuse of himself. 'I keep these nosegays from my admirers,' he said, 'to remind me of the duty of humility, Colonel.' And he laughed, by God!"

Sleepily Warren recalled the story. Funny—you usually did not think of a commanding general as suffering, and as seldom thought of one laughing at himself. As his sleep fog thickened, Warren smiled at the thought which came to him and which coupled William Rufus Shafter and Tomás Something Something Quemaduras as brothers under the skin. Their bond in common was that neither looked his part, one as a leader of men and the other as a tragedian. A general should be debonair in his gauntlets, a tragedian should brood in his cloak—anything else was an affront to all lovers of the tin-plated obvious.

XX

(Field notes of Warren Spangler at Caney, Oriente Province, Cuba, July 1, 1898, with certain vignettes he did not report, for one reason or another.)

It is six-thirty. The morning is misty in the bottoms, chilly everywhere. It's hard to imagine that within a few hours men will be gasping for breath even if unhit. Our men and the Cubans have taken positions east and south of the village, and I am with the artillery above the forks of the Guamas Creek on a high promontory. The gunners stand by their pieces, the lieutenants are tinkering with brass clinometers. There is silence, for everyone waits. An unseen bird in the valley is cranky about something—one just flew by, a red-bodied, blue-winged fellow. Wish I had time to study these Cuban birds.

The mist is lifting. Caney's barrios have red roofs and ocher walls. Not a soul in sight in the town, nor in the works about it, but thin curls of wood smoke are dissolving into the sky over its hill.

There goes our first shell. It is 6:35 A.M.

A stout, middle-aged captain in shirt sleeves watched the puff of the shell through field glasses. He had trouble fixing the place of the distant explosion because of the billowing gun smoke; he also was handicapped by his suspenders, which he supported with one hand while he wormed the binoculars with the other.

"Damn miserable black powder!" the captain muttered.

Major Dillenback and he had hoped smokeless stuff would arrive from England in time, but . . .

"Lieutenant, raise the range. Try twentythree hundred. Continue with percussion shell."

Soon a shot hit the wooden blockhouse near the Santiago road, and Captain Capron saw white-jacketed Spaniards fly out of it like wasps from a stick-struck nest. . . . Good shooting, considering. "For purposes of economy, the artillery will use the store of

black powder now on hand." Regular units will fire their guns four times a year to expel chimneyswifts and other foreign matter. Thank you, gentlemen of the Congress, you cheap bastards. . . .

"Lieutenant, have Number Two load shrapnel. Cut your fuses to spray the trenches before that nearer blockhouse. . . . They're not ready on Two? Not ready? Well, *get them ready!*"

General Lawton and a newspaper reporter came up and stood with the captain to watch the bombardment; Capron's guns drubbed the forts and the trenches until everyone on the hill went mercifully deaf. Conversation became a painful exercise in lip reading, gestures, and intuition. To the farrago of the guns there was no reply whatsoever from the forts.

The general rode off after a time, but the reporter stayed.

"What's the range, Captain?" he shouted.

Capron told him by two fingers and a halving sign with a third, wishing the young man would go away. Reporters bothered Captain Capron. Vultures—this fellow kept gaping at the thickening pillar of dust rising from the town, and glancing from time to time back at him. . . . The gray-haired captain stiffened—not *another* question about his son Allyn, lying in his grave at Las Guasimas. . . .

"Captain Capron, w-would you mind a personal question?"

The captain ignored him, gazing steadily across the valley of guinea grass toward the town; down left was a wrecked coconut grove and a field of pineapples long out of cultivation. Under the brightening sun, too, the flag on the main stone fort showed clearly now.

"What I was going to ask wasn't for my paper, Captain, b-but for me. . . . What about the w-women and children in the town, Captain?"

Capron was as unprepared for the odd diffidence as any man who leans against a push which does not come.

"What about them?"

"Well, sir, not even the s-soldiers are shooting back." The reporter seemed to be having trouble getting his words out, and his face was red.

"Just what are you driving at, young man?"

"Oh, nothing," the reporter said. "Forget it. It wasn't military, and didn't make sense, I g-guess."

Hammering an enemy with field guns prepares the way for your infantry, but I wish I could sponge a picture from my mind of babies being mutilated over in that pink-and-yellow town. I can see them screaming with pain and wonder, while their mothers rock them and cower. Or perhaps Mother is dead and a big, grown-up sister of twelve has them on her terrified hands. But the misfortune of the children is our good luck: Capron says that if the Spaniards had even one decent modern gun in Caney we'd all be blown to hell off this hill.

Heavy firing now from the left, where Ludlow's brigade is moving in. I cannot see them yet, and at the distance the musketry sounds less ferocious than the sputtering of the mangoes we fried last night, but can hardly be more lethal. . . .

It is a curious feeling, having a box seat for battle. The aspect of the correspondents and attachés on the hill is polite and picnic-like; most are beslung with kodaks and spyglasses like rubberneckers in Fairmount Park, and carry bags or hampers which look like lunch boxes. Major General Breckinridge is speaking earnestly to a Cuban colonel who is scratching his armpits and drawing patterns in the dust with his boot toe. A couple of redlegs stagger up from behind the hill with shells and bags of powder; they are taut-looking, as men are who work with mules and heavy weights. The breech of one of the guns has stuck, and the gunners are cursing it into working order. Count von Goetzen, the Kaiser's visiting fireman, looks soiled, but his monocle surveys Captain Capron's drooping suspenders with frosty disdain. I guess we don't present a classic tableau like the little mound at Ratisbon to a Prussian professional, but personally I feel guilty being here at all, ready to view the deaths of men as a spectacle.

Lawton is back hot and dusty, but his gallant mustachios lend him an air of tirelessness. He is breaching military etiquette, I suppose, by directly specifying firing missions to the gunners over Capron's head; those four sizzling tubes will bend in their middles like boiled macaroni by noon. It must be difficult for a general officer to keep still once battle is joined and gets out of his hands more or less. . . .

A regiment of Chaffee's brigade began its assault across a creek on the right, the general says, and was allowed to get within eight hundred yards of the Spanish lines unopposed. Then when it sifted through a hedge bordering a sunken road, a line of Spaniards popped up like cardboard soldiers and shot the regiment to tatters. They've withdrawn into the road with their dead and wounded—perhaps this carefree roundup of a few blockhouses won't be so easy after all. . . .

I saw Chaffee this morning gesticulating fiercely in council with Lawton, and was impressed by his frontiersman look of lean competence; he wears no insignia, but his habitual cigar does the trick of identifying him as a man of consequence in an army que tienen nada que fumar.

Adna Romanza Chaffee sat his horse, leaning on the pommel with both forearms to watch his Seventh Infantry take over the assault from the chewed Seventeenth. He straightened, looked at the sun, and sneezed; he took the dead cigar out of his mouth, wiped his mustaches, and replaced it. . . . Getting on to noon, it was, and up yonder were the soft-touch forts and down here still was his brigade. Only one skimpy battalion holding Caney, the Cubans said, hey? There were at least fifteen hundred *hombres* up there behind that barbed wire, and with a splendid field of fire, too! At the rate this fight's going . . .

A memory skipped through the general's mind: he heard a young captain of cavalry calling cheerfully to his troop as they rammed a charge home to Kiowa hostiles long ago. . . .

"Let's go, Seventh," growled the same captain grown older. "If any man is killed, I'll make him a corporal!"

It did not sound the same as once it had along the Sweetwater in '74, and Chaffee was glad none of his panting footsloggers had heard.

A couple of platoons of Cubans were going in with the Seventh, and the general frowned. They looked longer on fleas than on guts, but what could you expect when a *mambi's* standard battle equipment was a rusty Winchester, a machete, and an empty stomach,

and he campaigned on rations of snakes, mangoes, and insects? But now—but now we'll see—we'll see. Some of the Plains Indians had been frowzier than Billy-be-damned and still ran the gaiters off the best cavalry in the Old Army: wrinkled old Satank, and the Cheyenne "dog soldiers," and Quahnah Parker, who looked like a poet. Damn seldom a big moose like Roman Nose in the whole starving lot. But scrawny and savage though they were, they'd been men, *fighting* men, by God! Certainly they'd been fiendish, too, but Chaffee remembered Sand Creek and a Colonel Chivington—there was a fine, infamous American name!—and the target practice American soldiers had had at seventyfive yards on a naked Indian child who might have grown to become a painted brave in fifteen years or so. . . .

The general saw two queer characters hurrying along the edge of the creek below him, tugging at a jackass who wanted to crop grass and to hell with the singing noises overhead that the men were ducking. The white man was gotten up like a newspaper correspondent, and the other creature was either a Cuban or a gorilla, Chaffee wasn't sure which. It was unusual to see a newspaper reporter so close under fire, when so many sent home their "eye-witness details" after interviewing skulkers and the wounded.

"Clear out of there!" the general shouted. "What do you think this is, the promenade at Bar Harbor?"

The tall white man stared at the officer on horseback and gestured toward him to his companion. They veered uphill, the Cuban crooning into the she-donk's ear. Just short of Chaffee the *mambi* uttered a squeal, fell, and rolled on his back.

"Jorge!" the white man said, dropping to his knees beside the fallen man. The donkey nosed at the body and questioned it with little noises. . . .

When the reporter passed the general he had no thought for him. He had slung the Cuban across the animal's back, and a worm of blood ran gaily down the white hide, but Chaffee could not say from what exact part of the jungle growth of hair on the man the blood came. The young fellow who led the donkey was saying:

"It wasn't your fault, Casey, it wasn't. . . . Don't feel so bad. . . ."

Chaffee took off his slouch hat and wiped his face with it. . . . Anything, just anything, could happen in a fight, including a man crying and apologizing to a donkey. Sometimes the general wished he'd stayed home and learned to raise chickens for a career—you never could tell what you were likely to run across on a battlefield, but with chickens you usually knew where you stood.

After I buried Jorge I had trouble with Casey for a while, but once she understood—and it took talking—she followed me without halter. I feel responsible for Jorge's death. He went anywhere Casey went, and I knew that—I couldn't take her and make him stay behind. . . . Burying him was awful. I just had a stick to scratch his grave. I saw death in worse forms on police calls, but it's different when you have to bury the dead. Jorge was still warm, even. I took a picture of the grave for Tomás, because it was all I could think to do. . . .

Chaffee was gone when I finished. Now I've wandered into a group of Negro soldiers drinking coffee in a swale behind the center of our attacking line. They belong to the Twentyfifth, and when one asked me where I'd won the donk the whole gang burst into laughter. You'd never think that only three hundred yards off behind stone walls and parapets other men are waiting to kill these resting coffee drinkers. The fight seems to have knocked off for lunch; there is practically no shooting. Lawton is far behind his timetable; obviously the Caney people were reinforced last night, and he will not be able to rejoin the center before Santiago as scheduled. Meanwhile, here a chaplain named Springer is boiling mocha for his men and for the honor of God before their battle resumes. He's a man! . . .

A major tells me that the center has been having a hot fight! So Steve was right in his hunch (N.B.—swap stories with him). They couldn't stand still! The outcome seems to be in doubt; Lawton was ordered back to support their attack but could not disengage himself from this mess. And everything looked so hunky-dory on paper! Shall we hear next that Duffield has been thrust into the sea at Aguadores?

I may as well stay and follow this fight to its conclusion.

The *lugarteniente* glowered about the stone room when his vision cleared for a moment. *Cristo!* Only three men still firing through the loopholes, and one of them propped against fallen masonry as though he were very tired or dying. The blood of the rest of the platoon kalsomined the walls, a rich coat daubed on by *yanqui* shrapnel and Krag slugs.

The lieutenant felt for his watch, saw it was three o'clock, and repocketed it feebly, showing neither surprise nor anxiety. The *Batallón Constitución* of which his men were a part, plus a few loyal irregulars, had been under attack for almost nine hours; *más ó menos* five hundred men. Only five hundred against the whole *Yanqui* army, to begin with. Now there were—the lieutenant shrugged—*pero menos*. Of his platoon there yet were three—no, Sandoval now lay on his face in the plaster—there were two. The general himself was dead three hours since, shot through the skull while lying already wounded on a stretcher.

The *yanquis* now were within point-blank range, so that even the lieutenant could see them clearly. Some were whites, some were “smoked”—brave men, one had to concede; they had come on over the bodies of their dead. So many, so many, *ay de mí*, too many to kill!

The lieutenant broke his sword, threw away the pieces, and picked up Sandoval's Mauser. He fired. An officer of the oncoming line toppled sideways. . . . Doroteita had a doll which would not stand well, and the little one cried with vexation when it would not. Little one? She must not be such a *niñita* after three absent years—ah, Saragossa was such a poor land, and yet it was too far away! The little son, Miguelito, studies well at the academy of El Pilar, his mother wrote, and knows the Latin now. Perhaps—perhaps might he become a man of holy orders? Think of the day when everyone, including his own rough father, must bow to Miguel and say, “*Buenas días, padre!*”! . . .

One of the two remaining soldiers trembled as if smitten with a fever of the accursed land, and the *teniente* looked his way. The enemy was just outside the blockhouse now, croaking like thirsty beasts as they staggered up to the walls. When the trembling

soldier tried to crawl out a hole in the rear wall the lieutenant shot him. . . . *Madre de Dios*, the quality of the replacements sent out in the latter days! That animal Pérez had desired to live, when better men lay dead around him. Possibly Pérez had been gifted with more imagination than they among whom he now sprawled; he feared the retribution of his own officer less than the *americanos*, and for this he was dead. *Pues*, now perforce one would discover for oneself whether these conquering dogs outside had the *pun-donor* to spare prisoners. The lieutenant had repeated tales of their bestialities so often to brace his men against surrender that he no longer remembered whether he had believed them in the beginning himself or whether he had smiled over them as a device to put spine into his own *hijos de perras*.

When the first American, a blackbeard with a paunch, came through the door stumbling over fallen timbers and plaster, the *teniente* could not bring himself to utter the word "surrender." So he tossed aside his rifle and bowed without rising.

"A sus ordenes, señor," he said, and fainted so languorously that it was tantamount to a yawn. . . .

"He surrendered the joint to you, Creelman!"

An officer with a drawn pistol said the words to the blackbeard while his eyes roved the litter of bodies in the fort. He saw a movement—a trifle late he fired, and the last defender to shoot at a *yanqui* fell across his comrades.

Creelman snatched at the arm which had been shattered by the Spaniard's bullet. A young man entering just then with two black doughboys caught him as he fell.

"Man, man, just look at the chitlins!" one of the Negroes said of the quiet fort.

Warren Spangler lowered the wounded Creelman and tore off his sleeve. While he stanching the bleeding the other said:

"Wait till—the chief hears that the—first blockhouse at Caney surrendered to the *New York Journal*! Not a bad war for the *Journal*, hey, but kind of—wearing on guys like Marshall and me, hey?"

When I got hold of my stomach again after the sight of that slaughterhouse, I helped to carry out Spaniards who were still breathing. Their lieutenant was a particularly nasty case, having lost both kneecaps by a shell fragment.

The battle goes on. Fortines and trenches are taken, but the enemy has retired into the town itself and are begrudging it house by house, these cowardly dagos who most certainly would run shrieking when faced by armed men instead of by the weak and helpless! The butchery is forced on us, but what a God's waste of courage—they won't surrender! The heat of the day and their efforts are making some of our men blood-crazy, and others vomit.

Why won't these God-damned fools surrender?

As it had observed noontime for lunch, the fight knocked off at dusk almost as if the fighters had heard a quitting whistle. The victors' admiration of their prisoners was unstinted; one *Batallón Constitución* survivor said, "They applauded everything we said, on the assumption that he who is brave must also be bright." The sun dropped behind the tower of the church in Caney plaza as medical orderlies, accompanied by armed soldiers, hunted wounded Spaniards from door to door to carry them back to the church, which was one of the last "forts" to give in.

Warren joined a squad of searchers, weary and nauseated but driven by the volition which burns the nerves themselves for fuel. He plodded past a cluster of the prisoners who had not been able to get away with the eighty who broke out to go back to Santiago, and a swarthy officer among them plucked at Warren's sleeve. He was smoking a cigarette, and Warren was impressed by the rings the man wore on his fingers more than by his English.

"Sir, will you please to procure for us es-shovels? We would much like to compose our dead ones."

Since the haggard *americano* merely stared dumbly, the officer repeated patiently, carefully pronouncing every syllable. He flashed his rings at a trench in which a row of bodies lay, empty cartridge shells keeping them company.

"It is not for to dig, but only to cover the grave of them, sir.

The brave ones dug their grave for themselves and did fight from it today, yes."

"Hurry up there, mister!" the sergeant of the patrol called to Warren. "We've got to push. You don't want to be left in this town, do you?"

"No, but what's the hurry?"

"We gotta join the main body p.d.q."

"Say, do you mean that after marching half the night and f-fighting all day, you're g-g—" Warren could not finish.

"Sure, mister. The rest of the Army's on top of San Juan Hill, wherever that is, and having a bad time. They always holler for us infantry when the going's tough. Why, I remember a time when we was chasing Geronimo and——"

"B-but, Sergeant, w-we're all dead on our f-feet!"

The doughboy laughed harshly. "O.K., O.K. Then we'll take the ferry or something, but we're going back!"

Caney was not badly wrecked. Most of Capron's barrage must have registered on the forts and trenches. But still, the people—Christ, the poor people!

Naked toddlers, quieter than babies ought to be, with bellies puffed out—starvation is an obscene joker. Women's hair dragging in the dust as they wail and rock by their dead . . . I saw an old crone stumbling along the road to Santiago carrying a tiny husk of a little old man on her shoulders. Her husband, he was, I found; she was blind but he could direct her, for he was only crippled. And besides the hungry, the homeless, and the fever-ridden here, there are lepers—even a Chinese leper! I saw him.

No misery can surprise me. On the floor of the mayor's house was a dead young girl, lying on her back and stripped to the waist. Between her breasts stuck a dagger. I grabbed a villager we were using as an interpreter, and he cringed when I pointed to the girl. "Look," I said, "she wasn't killed by a bullet or a shell! She was stabbed!"

The man looked relieved; I don't know what he thought I'd clutched him for. "Sí, señor," he said. "Perhaps her lover did it, no? Qué importa—there is much death everywhere."

Then he twisted out of my hand and ran off.

Warren found Casey in the bush where he had hidden her, and she picked a slow way back along the road they had traveled that morning, with him fast asleep on her back and his fingers rigidly gripping her mane. Behind them Caney was dark except for the flickering lanterns of the prisoner guard, and the moonlight.

The moonlight shone through the smashed roof of the church, and doctors working in there were passingly grateful. The broadest shaft slanted across the altar, which was a trifle heavy to move, but which made a quite serviceable operating table.

xxi

Theodore Roosevelt once said, "I never met anyone who enjoyed life as much as I do. I always have fun, constant fun." The morning the fun began at San Juan was no exception; as a nature lover, he was enraptured from the start. The skies were rain-washed, the foliage of the countryside showed many greens and was lush with flowers, and the distant plain of Santiago seemed an amphitheater for battle, like the one before Priam's Troy—mountain peaks ringed it like Olympian spectators awaiting the deeds of their pet heroes. . . . And, by thunder, the colonel thought, there will be chivalries for the gods to smile upon soon! Nothing less could be forthcoming from his regiment—his very own now that Wood had moved up to take Young's place. Gentlemen, I give you: the First Volunteer Cavalry, clean-limbed and -minded, the essence of all that is fine in American manhood! Two or three Democrats in the ranks could not water the broth enough to matter.

Much depended upon the officers, of course, but the colonel was confident of them. Not once had he heard a dirty story from his juniors, a trait of detestable cads, and their toast at mess always had been, "The officers! May the war last till each is killed, wounded, or promoted!" The grammar of that might not be flawless, but the manly spirit—ah!

The nuisance was that he had no orders to fling his regiment

forward into shot and glory. They hunkered here behind El Pozo waiting for Grimes to open a diversionary cannonade to help the cleanup at Caney. Shafter always favored Lawton and the infantry when there was distinction to be won, it seemed. As for the yellow custard himself, where would he tarry? Far back, of course, reclining in his tent like the eunuch general in *Salaambô* who scratched himself with a golden spatula while his legions fought. . . .

Colonel Roosevelt finished his beans and scraped his mustache just as the first gun of Grimes boomed. At his side, acting brigadier Leonard Wood wrinkled his forehead uneasily, and near by a correspondent drinking coffee spilled some.

"The men are not placed entirely to my satisfaction, Colonel." Wood gestured at the concentration on the slopes behind the smoke-wreathed battery. "The enemy must have firing tables for this landmark, laid out to microscop——"

Roosevelt's football-kicking companion of their Washington days interrupted himself to listen to a rising whine. A second later a shell cracked overhead, and there were shrieks in the courtyard of the cane mill where the officers were breakfasting.

"Shrapnel! And they do have the range!"

Roosevelt looked at a fascinating bruise on his wrist. "I know. A ball hit me—no, it's really not a wound." He seemed to regret it.

"I'm glad," Wood said. "You'd better move your men under cover of those trees forward, Theodore. Be ready to take the lead for our brigade when I send word."

"Yes, sir, Leonard."

Roosevelt trotted briskly and got his command under the trees. The shellbursts had killed and wounded several men, including cavalry regulars and a larger toll of Cubans. Glancing back at El Pozo, the colonel observed Grimes's gunners shooing away a group of mounted civilians from their now silent pieces. One of their visitors was a big fellow, familiar to Colonel Roosevelt as the damned-fool owner of the *New York Journal*, who had supported Bryan in the last election. Young Mr. Hearst, however, was right-minded about this war.

"The target the dons are shooting at isn't Hearst or his horse,

boys," the colonel muttered. "It's the black cumulus of your own firing. . . . We would have done better by you in the Navy Department."

While waiting in the brush the colonel checked his equipment, which in most details, down to his thirtyone-cent leggings, resembled his men's. In two or three respects he differed: his was a blue polka-dot kerchief, his revolver was one which had come off the Maine, and tucked in several pockets and into the cord of his Stetson were spare spectacles. Breathing on the lenses of the ones he wore, the colonel polished them as he tramped away on a tour of inspection.

Trooper Hawkins's glasses steamed over frequently while Troop L lay in the jungle, and if he had needed one last irritation to disillusion him of war's "magnificently stern array," that tore it. He spat a word and shifted to an elbow to wipe his cheaters. The morning did not enrapture Caleb; his underwear was soiled from persistent diarrhea, his face was bite-blotched and purple with the dank heat, and a greasy fried hardtack quivered in his stomach like the jellyfish he'd poked with sticks when he'd summered at Cape May as a child.

He fell back supine, clasped his hands under his head, and resolved to forget his surroundings. Step by step he reconstructed the luxuries of a Turkish bath. Grimes's battery bellowed, Mauser bullets keened and popped overhead, but . . .

You'd had three too many down at the Rathskeller at Broad and Chestnut, say, and wanted a reviving before the Assembly dance. Well, first you got your clothes off and sat on a slab in the superheated room to cook out all the pore-deep crud . . .

In a thicket near by, Horace Bigod and Rattlesnake Fred finished a lackadaisical dispute they had begun the night before.

The Indian said, "It doesn't matter, when you come right down to it, whether we're supposed to get soap and candles on our ration. We don't, and that's that!"

"You didn't put it suchaways last night!" Murray said.

"I'm humiliated."

"I say, if they're coming to us, we've got them coming to us, by God!"

"Oh, sure. Well, take it up with the Noodle, and if he doesn't give you satisfaction, report him to the Great White Father."

"Come to think of it, Hors," Murray said after a pause, "what would we do with all that soap and taller if she does catch up with us?"

. . . and after the hot-water spray, the cold. Wow! What a shock! But the aftertingle was a daisy! . . .

Faro Frank Close had an audience for details of surgical triumphs of his dental career. Corporal Seiffert weakly tried to stop him, but heard Frank on, spellbound.

"So I couldn't do nothing while the feller was yawping and blowing blood all over, even on my fancy diploma. So I slugs him—easy, of course—just enough to prepare him for the gas. Then I thinks: here's the chance to try my new idea, the Close Method of Natural Replantation, what'll make mankind my debtors. This guy's swallowed his front teeth on account of the sock in the puss he's got, and it looks sure he's going to have to like milk toast for a whiles, so what's he got to lose? And that's how come I jerk some small choppers out of my landlady's dog and graft them onto his raw gums."

"O-o-oh God," the Noodle said in a faint voice.

"Naturally, being rushed-like, I couldn't file down the fangs proper, so my patient looks pretty fierce when he comes to. But I convinced him it wouldn't matter none—might even help him win saloon arguments without having to snatch for shooting irons hereafter."

"Did they?" the Noodle asked, and held his breath queasily.

Faro Frank sighed. "Never was able to tell. The cuss got himself ventilated for good, come the next Saturday night, so the Close Method never got a square deal. Not fair and square!"

. . . then Ali, muscular as a boilermaker but pallid as a baker, slapped you and kneaded and rubbed in the oil. . . .

"Why, damn your soul, certainly there's ghosts!" Tex Kingsland said. "Hell, don't take my word for it—I'm not asking you to! But you believe in the Good Book, don't you, eh? All right then, what about the Holy Ghost, eh? Answer me that: what about the Holy Ghost?"

"Bah!" said Benny DuKoff, and went to sleep.

. . . the dim dormitory when the steaming and pummeling were done, and the sleepers there, like corpses in a well-bred morgue. Phooey for the Assembly dance! Ah, those wonderful beautiful clean sheets! . . .

"Yeah," Trooper Woodruff said, eying the course of a lazy little snake under a bush, "that Lola had c-l-a-s-s class."

"I bet," Happy Jack Geoghegan said quickly. "Now lemme tell you about one I knew once. This quail, she——"

"You might even say capital-C Class," Smoky Stu said, chewing a cud of bark. "Yeah—having one prop only would of discouraged most females, but not Lola. She used to say, 'Hell, sweetheart, the gals in these places always has two legs, and that's ornery,' she says. 'Nothing to a two-legged woman. But lookey, sugar-finger, how many chances do you get to make ro-mance with a one-legged honey like Lola?' Yow! And that toilet water she used to souse on—man, that was class!"

The snake got inquisitive and raised its head. Smoky, who had waited for that indiscretion, puckered his mouth and let fly. A strap of juice drenched the head for a pinwheel bull's-eye, and the snake thrashed madly.

"Bingo!" said Trooper Woodruff.

. . . and the sleep between the white sheets that went on, and on, and——

"On your feet!" Corporal Seiffert shouted.

The Rough Riders fell into column for another of the jerky starts of the morning—they were delivering milk, or behaving like the Paoli Local, Caleb thought. Six hours would pass before they

start-stopped a mile and a half through the fetid basin between El Pozo and the San Juan ridge; as he squelched through the ruts Caleb saw that men had been pulled off to either side of the trail to let the cavalry division pass. Kent's infantry, they were, who had led off hours earlier. Among them were a number of wounded, who seemed dazed over injury which had fallen on them unseen; Caleb noticed that they attempted to be cheerful and that the crawling column passing them went more quietly—one might say more thoughtfully.

"How can the dons see us when we can't see them?" he asked Horace.

"Don't have to see us," said Horace. "They got noses."

The column came to a ford in Aguadores Creek, or so Caleb read it had been when he bought a book about the war a year later. However, after the march there were bets that the stream had been the Purgatorio, the San Juan, the Las Guamas, or the Rio Seco—to somebody it was just another dago creek beside which he'd nailed a sign, "1500 mi. to the Allentown Fair." There was general agreement among most, and particularly among men like the Noodle's squad, who had to halt hip-deep in the water for a time, that the crossing was "Bloody Ford."

Looming above the trail here and marking it better for Spanish aim was the Signal Corps balloon. The poorest artillerists of the Imperial Army were positive they could hit a target that size, nor did the riflemen on San Juan neglect it. The *yanquis* having been so considerate about supplementing their aiming stakes, the dons fired bullet and shrapnel, and though for a while they missed the big bag, their lead and iron sleeted into Bloody Ford economically, and into the clogged road back of it.

In the wicker basket floating above the jungle's roof a Signal Corps colonel peered at the west. It was hot for him in the basket, because of sun and flying shot, but the bag shaded him partially, and he was aware of an occasional breeze that he knew never penetrated into the trail below. He had a clear panorama of the ridge before Santiago from the balloon: a pagodalike blockhouse capped

the San Juan hill directly ahead, and there was a blue ranch house and a corral on the lesser rise to its left. Earthworks and barbed-wire entanglements staggered along the contours of both hills. Once the colonel saw a man in white walk slowly along the parapet of a *trinchera*: an officer, because the sunlight glinted off a naked sword. . . .

Hmm. The extension of our trail curves up between the two hills and out of sight between their saddle; there is another road off left, too, which, no doubt, goes somewhere. There are carrion birds overhead. Very little else of remark.

Glancing down, the colonel wondered again about the Seventy-first New York. They'd been lying doggo in the bushes for a long time now, with their feet stuck out in the trail and tripping other people going forward. Even from his height he had heard a general of division roar, regarding the prostrate New Yorkers, "Tell the rest of the troops to pay no attention to this sort of thing. It is highly irregular!"

Above, the colonel heard a dull plunk, and his balloon began to whistle like a man shot in the throat. Sooner or later this was bound to happen, he thought, either to the balloon or himself. . . . Down, down the basket sank quite deliberately, until it grounded. Its occupant stepped out unhurt, and another intrepid chapter had been written in the history of aerial warfare.

A number of officers congratulated the colonel on his lucky escape, and the four enlisted men who had been towing the balloon stretched out while the colonel reported the fruits of his gallant looksee.

"I saw men up there on those hills," the colonel said. "They are firing on our troops."

A distinguished-looking civilian in khaki spat and walked away.

Mr. Richard Harding Davis's khaki was rent and Mr. Davis's temper was frayed. In fact, he was incensed beyond measure, not merely over the Signal Corps' trifling, but because of the curs defending Santiago. . . . They had proven that the true color in their flag was the yellow of it! The skunks—placing guerrilla sharp-

shooters in the jungle to pick off doctors, medical stewards, and even the helpless wounded! . . .

It did not occur to Mr. Davis that plunging bullets from the distant hills could, and probably did, accomplish the deaths of unarmed men; however, whether it was by diabolism or accident, both the Aguadores and San Juan creeks now were a thin pink. More and more casualties were being ranked side by side, their feet in the streaky water, their backs propped against the muddy bank for protection, but still no word had come from headquarters for the jungle-swallowed corps. . . .

That carcass, Shafter! If he were so ill that he could not command, why had he not relinquished as Wheeler had? Now the time was noon and the men of Kent and Sumner still were thrashing about in this jungle hell, without orders, hideously confused, dropping like sheep! No one ever would find the bones of poor fellows who may have crawled off the trail to die; the land crabs, the wildcats, ants, and hard-shelled spiders would glut themselves. The vain, bullheaded nincompoop who commanded this army ought to be—

A bullet winged by his ear, and Davis leaped into the undergrowth. That was an aimed one! The trail here had debouched into a long clearing, as it did at various points—some of the widths comparable to Broadway, he said in *Scribner's*—and there was a tall, dense-leaved tree on a knoll in the center. Davis scanned the tree intently—his had been the keen eyes which had first spotted the enemy positions at Las Guasimas—until he saw a branch shake. Then, unmistakably, he saw breeches.

He ran, crouching, to the nearest Americans: Rough Riders. Their leader had hurried his regiment across the San Juan and had deployed it on the edge of open ground along the west bank.

"Come with me," Davis ordered a trooper. "I've located one of their damned snipers!"

Horace Bigod splashed back across the ford with Davis, and Caleb came along too. They crawled the last few yards to the fringe of the clearing, and the reporter pointed out the tree which was the guerrilla's nest.

"There!" he said suddenly. "See the leaves shaking? He's coming down, I think! No, maybe he's seen us!"

"Keep your shirt on, partner," said Trooper Bigod, and he fired at the movement in the leaves.

After a pause Caleb said, "My dibs."

Perspiration stung his eyes and his glasses were fogged again, but he leveled carefully on the place. His blind spot blacked out the gun sights. He shot.

A little man tumbled into view and, when he saw who was doing the shooting, came at them roaring like an alligator. A 'gator with a white beard, a sun helmet, and an Alabama accent.

"Blithering idiots!" yelled General Wheeler. "Y'all like to killed me! Can't you damyankees tell when an officer is reconnoitering?"

Behind the Rough Riders' position near the ford of the San Juan a captain from corps headquarters also was scouting, but he reined to a halt beside a piece of ordnance which looked like something out of *The War of the Worlds*. Its crew were lying about on their backs, looking too unhappy to be dead, the captain saw. Creepers and vines above their upturned faces popped as bullets punctured them, but the artillerymen found no topic for conversation in this; one redleg had just mentioned cold beer, and all had fallen into a poignant silence.

The captain dismounted and led his horse up to a sergeant in a dirty undershirt who was battering at the odd gun with an ax—the blunt end, fortunately, the captain observed.

"Having trouble, or making it, Sergeant?" he said.

The glance the sergeant gave him might have warned a less obtuse officer that when a non-com had trouble he usually preferred to handle it without being buzzed by idle staff punks; however, the redleg mumbled a slightly equivocal "yessir."

"I've never seen the Sims-Dudley rifle close up," the officer said. "Mind? Don't let me interrupt—er—whatever you're doing."

"Nossir."

"Interesting, interesting indeed. How much does it weigh?"

The sergeant hitched his suspenders and poked the blade of

the ax into the gun. "She weighs five-twentyeight, the carriage four-thirtyeight, the trail one-o-six. Sir."

"That's quite a load to jackass through mud, I'd say."

"Jackass is the word, Captain."

The sergeant found a fulcrum for the axhead under the breach-block and heaved on the haft until he turned a rich cerise. Then the leverage slipped and he barked his knuckles.

"Why, you miserable, no-good son of——" the sergeant said, quite softly. He squatted, sucking his knuckles and considering new approaches to the nameless son.

The captain peered curiously under the barrel. "And this is the pneumatic cylinder, I expect? The explosion of the activating charge compresses the air in this tube, and that in turn blows the shell through the rifle. Right?"

"Right," the sergeant said, and began a systematic pounding around the open breach as if he were a cooper hooping a keg.

"How much of a shell does——"

"The pay load of the project-ile," droned the redleg, who was fond of his gun after all, "is three-point-five pounds of dynamite gelatin, and the caliber is two-point-five."

"Low muzzle velocity and a fairly high trajectory?"

"Yessir. A good outfielder might guess he could shag our fungos, because you can see them coming. Her range is just under two thousand yards."

"Remarkable, remarkable. The blast is tremendous, I've heard."

"Tremenjous is the word, yessir."

The officer cuddled his chin and frowned as the non-com hit the breech a special lick.

"Wouldn't you say an ax is a rather crude instrument to use on a finely machined weapon like this, Sergeant?"

"Yessir, I would, but it's all the tools we got."

"What, may I ask, do you propose to accomplish with it?"

The sergeant showed acerbity.

"Get the shell t'hell out that's stuck in the goddam breech, that's what—sir!"

"A live shell?"

"Yessir."

The captain remounted and galloped off.

The sergeant called his gunner. "Smitty, you come have a whack at this bugger."

"O.K. . . . What did the captain want?"

"Nothing. Just wanted to ask the usual damn-fool questions, but he lost interest. That's the main trouble with this army. Nobody stays interested in nothing."

Caleb and Horace passed the dynamite gun on their way back to the San Juan ford at one-thirty; Caleb shook his watch and put it to his ear to be sure. He felt a strange exhilaration over nearly having barked a two-star general off a limb like a squirrel; he held no grudge against the venerable athlete who had risen from his bed of pain to roam the woods at large, nor had he dreamed General Wheeler had been his target. Nevertheless—Caleb chuckled—he *had* potted at a general, a favor granted to few sons of women, and he found the thought amusing. He shared his canteen with Horace as if it were a loving cup, and they were the new tandem champions of the Bachelor Wheelmen, when Horace, too, gave one of his very rare snickers.

Not entirely to their surprise, an advance was starting when they reached their lines. From the history of his favorite war he read months later, Caleb gathered that no authority higher than a staff lieutenant had ordered the corps to assault the slopes of Kettle and San Juan hills, but, he wondered, was that untoward in an army whose oriflamme was a toothbrush in the hatband and whose second-in-command shinnied up trees?

Waves of horseless cavalry stumbled into the open. Men with wire cutters and machetes were breaking gaps in the barbed wire at the bottom of the hill; the waves, congesting briefly against the fence, flowed onward as a swarm. Lieutenant Parker had turned up after a disappointing rendezvous with the Seventyfirst New York, and had his four Gatlings stuttering over the heads of the swarm like woodpeckers gone crazy. Colonel Roosevelt, a battle-happy target tall on his horse, shrilled over the din.

"Where the hell was you two at?" Corporal Seiffert barked when he saw the two truants. "Never mind lying to me now—there ain't time! Here we go."

Troop L waded into the waist-deep Paraná grass as into water. The sun, the furnace which had made the jungle an oven, now became a giant with a fiery club that thrashed the bright field. Trooper Geoghegan rose to advance with his mates, only to pitch into the hot grass after a few steps. His face was clammy, his lips white. Trooper Woodruff stooped to raise his bunkie, but their corporal kicked Smoky Stu erect.

"Leave him lay where Jesus flang him—he's just frazzled out." The kick was not hard, nor was the Noodle's tone. He was a journeyman asserting a workaday fact with neither contempt nor compassion.

Caleb's memory stored the impression of Seiffert's voice as it did the sight of Geoghegan's doughy face. Nor for the rest of his life did he forget the smell of rifle smoke and sweat, nor the molten feel of his body, nor the ratlike animal which leaped up at his feet to hide farther on in the rank grass, nor the monotonous *whisk-whisk* of leggings through the clinging stuff. . . . How did he keep going when tough hombres like Happy Jack fainted? Or was a light head and millstone feet the sign that he would keel over soon? . . .

The trudge up Kettle Hill with carbines at port was dog's work and slow. Popular historians call it a "charge," implying briskness, or even banners and drums; however, there was no music, and only yellow guidons limp on their pikes, and men shambling forward with their mouths hanging open.

Suddenly remembering an omission of his first action, Caleb fired his carbine. . . . Shooting was expected of a soldier, although why, when you saw nothing to shoot at, he could not say. But other men were pausing to fire as they went, so his feeling of being conspicuously absurd passed. . . . He knelt the next time, aiming at a U-shaped notch in the first earthwork; he marked the place in his mind, believing he would look there when the swarm flooded over it, to see if he had hit an enemy. How he was to tell his vic-

tim from other marksmen's he did not know, but a moment later, for no more significant a cause than a stumble which jarred his teeth, he forgot all about the idea of counting coups.

Colonel Roosevelt was spurring Little Texas hell-for-leather to the forefront of the attackers, but to Caleb the bravery of the colonel and his horse was less remarkable than the way the Rooseveltian kerchief streamed out behind his neck. . . . It was peculiar how you could notice a dramatic effect like that at a time like this, polka dots and all. . . . Caleb felt separate from the men falling around him; he was sorry for them, but not to distraction; fear, the shadow of death, had not touched him. He believed he could even state calmly, if he were asked, how many shots were left in his magazine and in his web belt.

His rifle was deflected by Smoky Stu when he knelt to aim again; the little cowboy lurched so heavily against him that both lost balance and tumbled flat into the scrub, and Caleb's glasses flew off, but did not break.

"I got a punctured tire," Smoky said thickly. ". . . No, go on—scorch! Let me be, I'll manage."

The blood soaking through Woodruff's sweat-black shirt turned it a curious mulberry color, and because this thing was happening to a man with whom he had eaten that morning, a personal doubt came to Caleb. He stayed with the rest of the plodders up the hill, but his lips and knees quaked; powerful as the clap of fear was which struck Trooper Hawkins, the habit of moving along with his fellows was stronger.

The crest of the hill was thirty yards away, and seemed deserted.

Among the first on the crown of Kettle Hill, a young officer of the Tenth Cavalry swung his saber in the air and laughed. A huge black trooper looked up at him with veteran disapproval and said something to the young man, who laughed again.

"They haven't cast the bullet that'll kill me, Luchious!"

The bullet he could not have known about took the lieutenant in the mouth and carried away the back of his head. The big Negro wiped a spray of matter from his face and stared a question at a

very white soldier wearing glasses, who also had witnessed the careless death. Without a word, both sprang forward over the crest after the vanishing Spaniards, feeling perhaps that they were tempting fate to hang around so poor a prophet as the gay young lieutenant of a moment ago.

The hill had a sugar cauldron on its top which made men call it Kettle; some sticklers later insisted it was the real San Juan Hill and that the San Juan-designate was named something else. All agreed, however, that there was a shallow lagoon between the crests of the two, through which the stormers of Kettle splashed to assault the higher "San Juan" to the south. The wash of the water about his thighs pleased Horace Bigod so much that he threw away his trousers. . . . There would be lots of men approximately his size lying around afterward who wouldn't object to lending a pair of pants; the need of pants during the night rains they'd be beyond noticing. But when you were on a war party it was better to go naked. . . . White men, of course, could not enjoy the tactile subtlety of the custom, which bothered Horace not at all.

He tramped along with the cavalry swarm up their second slope of the day, wishing Spaniards were not so fleet of foot or that he were faster. The swarm he moved among now was a military slumgullion of a half-dozen different regiments, some having no commanders; however, the troops were as unaware of being leaderless in these instances as were the junior officers whom death and wounds had elevated. Sprinkled among the regulars and Rough Riders also were a number of grim fellows with a silver "71" on their slouch hats who individually had determined that they had come to Cuba to fight and not to lie in the bushes.

Horace did not miss his bunkie, Foureyes, nor the rest of his squad from which he had become separated, for he felt entirely self-sufficient. There were only rare opportunities for an Episcopalian to "count coups" in a white man's world, and Two Strikes, the Sioux who had been sociably converted at Carlisle Institute, meant to wring the most from his chance. The dull day was ap-

proaching when he would have to become Horace Bigod forever, and a tinsmith or a reservation schoolteacher. His lust for battle was a simple thing; white men, however, complicated honorable killing with a lot of words. They caw-cawed over all natural appetites, as a matter of fact, not so much in an effort to understand themselves as to pester one another, and yet they had become the master race in spite of such foolishness. It was a remarkable thing.

He fell over a dead Cuban and kicked a machete which looked worth picking up. On one side of the blade near the hilt was stamped "Made in Hartford, Ct., U.S.A." A hundred feet or so from the blockhouse on the San Juan hill Horace found a purpose for the jungle weapon from Hartford.

"Here, hack this wire!" Colonel Roosevelt shouted, pointing to the last *trocha* with his revolver. "Aren't you one of my men? . . . Well, later I want an explanation of what happened to your clothing, soldier! Have you no modesty?"

Infantry, cavalry; blacks, whites, reds; Kent's men and Sumner's, all topped San Juan at once.

When most of the swarm had engulfed the crest and passed on over, a civilian appeared on it, puffing a pipe and wearing a long rubber slicker which made heat-sick men vomit merely to look at. He stood on the parapet of the highest *trinchera* and looked down into it. A redheaded Spanish corpse caught his eye among the slain.

"Well, here we are," Stephen Crane said at large. . . .

Somehow he'd never thought of Spaniards as having red hair, he realized as he made a note of it, any more than before this day he had pondered the "awful majesty of a man shot in the face."

He sat down on a bass drum which balanced unaccountably on the parapet; something clinked in the pocket of his rubber coat, and he took out a pair of spurs, made as if to throw them away, but replaced them when he saw some soldiers watching him curiously. The bugs were working in his blood again; he felt weak and chilled, even under the high sun.

Colonel Roosevelt and a nude Indian who struck Crane as fa-

miliar came out of the bullet-pocked fort. The colonel was fully dressed but his teeth looked as naked as the Indian's hide to Crane, for he was excited, tremendously excited. His normally high voice had gained an octave when he waved his navy revolver at the corpses in the dirty white uniforms.

"Just look at these damned dead Spaniards!" he said. "I killed one with my own hand—he was trying to hide!"

. . . Give the boss of the Rough Riders enough ammunition and advertising, Crane thought, and he'll storm any hill in the world. T. R. was a freak; a gentleman politician was bound to be. . . . Roosevelt went away, but the Indian who was clad in an identification disk came over to Crane and said:

"Was it underwear or socks you staked me to in Tampa, Mr. Crane?"

Then Crane remembered him. "Did you kill any Spaniards in the blockhouse with your own hand, Bigod?"

"No," Horace said, throwing away the Hartford machete. "There wasn't but one slowpoke left in there, and the colonel outranked me."

Caleb willed to move one foot, just one. He strained to impose his will on the right foot. . . . If the head wouldn't move and a man couldn't get up from this absurd position, he thought with a burst of terror, something was wronger than a mere "punctured tire" like Smoky Stu's. . . .

The foot would not move, so he closed his eyes, exhausted by the concentration. Dread nibbled at his wits because, although he felt no pain, he was unable to move. He did not know where he was hit nor how much he had bled. One moment he had been running to vault over a dead tree trunk, and then the stunning blow had seemed to electrocute him, after which there had been a blankness lasting some indefinite time. When he came to, he saw his feet propped in a perfectly silly fashion on the same rotten log he had tried to clear; that had been a long time ago, but still he lay in his abandoned position, legs spread wide and heels resting in the pink fungus on the log.

So far as he could see along the foreshortened length of himself, there was no blood. He wondered if he were split up the back, but—God, God—he couldn't feel a thing, and he couldn't move.

He wept a little and fainted again.

Horace and Fred Murray found him by the light of a lantern they had stolen. The Indian had two purposes in roaming the hillside in the dark, and now that he had clothed himself, the finding of his bunkie had achieved the other. Rattlesnake Fred had come along looking for souvenirs.

The two looked down at their fallen squad mate, and Murray wagged his head mournfully.

"Poor old Foureyes," he said. "He was a good pardner. Nobody ever asked him for a fight that he didn't get one."

Caleb did not believe he could talk, but when he heard his epitaph he found he could—they might bury him for a *muerto-muerto!*

"Come off that," he said, not without force. "I'm not dead. Just get me out of this!"

xxii

"Oh, things could be worse, I suppose, but I don't know how," the surgeon said as he rinsed his hands.

The hands shook so badly after twenty hours of continuous cutting that Warren shivered to think of them preparing for more.

"We are at least pleased with the men's wounds," the doctor continued. "Medically speaking, that is, of course. Out of the four, five hundred—frankly, I've lost track of our cases—so far, there are few men smashed up internally. The Mauser bullet drills bone as cleverly as flesh, or otherwise the task of surgical repair would have gotten totally out of hand. Now you must excuse me. I see the wagons coming."

You could hear the moans first, Warren thought, and then smell the cargoes before you could see them. These tumbrels never

were meant to haul men, hurt men, but rather ammunition to inflict hurt on other men; as ambulances, they were manure carts. When a driver had to whip his team and jolt across the potholes of a creek to gather momentum for the opposite bank, his freight was flung by heaps from tail gate to headboard and back again, and because the wagon beds had been roughened by heavy cases, the wounded slid on splinters to jumble their miseries. A trifling thing a splinter was, but Warren heard a man with several wounds groan and beg, "Please, for the love of God, Doc, pick out the lumber afore the lead!"

"Will my friend walk when he recovers, do you think?" Warren said.

Caleb had been shot through the upper chest, the doctor said; the bullet had made a clean passage, wrenched at its victim's backbone on its way out, and had left the surgeon with little to do but let nature and time have their chance. Like most of the hospital's patients, Warren had found, Caleb lay in the dew without tent, blanket, or pillow, and would burn under the sun as he lay, also. However, he still wore some clothing, and whoever had brought him in had wrapped him in a poncho. The "hospital" had no such supplies; men were scissored out of uniforms to stay naked to weather, flies, and to *stegomyia fasciata*, the mosquito of yellow fever, as the doctors Agramonte, Carroll, Lazear, and Reed were soon to discover by experimenting with death.

"Will my friend walk again?" Warren repeated.

"I can't say." The surgeon spoke with a sudden harshness. "I can't tell. I don't know anything." He rubbed his eyes like a child.

Warren felt ashamed of being insistent when the man was so dog-tired and irritable. Ten of him there were for three army divisions, and until late last night after the battle there had been only five, with the help of a few orderlies to do the lifting, the cleaning of flesh, the bonesetting. . . . Warren flooded with anger, sick at soul because he knew its futility. Would to God the bigmouths who had shouted and prayed for this war were here in place of these wounded! In pain and delirium, and without food, or a rag to keep their bodies off the ground! Casualties, the reports

would read; *casualties*—what in the name of Christ on the Cross was “casual” about human agony? But it was a usefully colorless word for the arithmetic of butchery.

“I’m sorry, Doctor,” Warren mumbled. “I was shocked to find this fellow here. I——”

His mind left his sentence, because Caleb’s bloodless face hypnotized him. How could it belong to the chap with mobile eyes and the cynical leer he’d known in Philadelphia? Warren wondered. That fop, that Philistine who always had been so cockily sure of himself was—this stranger?

“Someday, please the Lord,” Warren thought aloud, “we’ll both laugh when I tell him he looked as innocent as a dead nun.”

“You speaking to me?” a bandaged soldier said. He was one of those who, although hurt themselves, were trying to help the desperate hospital staff. He carried a canteen in his good hand.

“No, friend,” Warren said, and had to hurry away, because the look of the bandaged man added to that of Caleb’s face swelled pity in Warren’s heart to bursting.

*Mother whose heart hung humble as a button
On the bright splendid shroud of your son,
Do not weep.
War is kind.*

Crane had said that one night in Tampa, adding that nobody wanted to publish his poem, but now a hospital-by-courtesy had published its bitter-tender truth for Warren Spangler.

. . . Where was Steve? He had missed him at the correspondents’ camp near El Pozo that morning, and had stopped at the field hospital to see if he had turned up there, in fact. Tomás had said, when Warren awoke, “The señor Crane, he gone, boss. Boss, he got more vomito coming back to him, the señor Crane—you not see this thing yesterday?”

No, Warren had to confess, he hadn’t noticed; he had been too self-concerned, and it made him feel guilty, too. One of young Mr. Spangler’s inner confusions was beginning to resolve itself; he was learning that he was born to be a Brother’s Keeper, despite his

nourished contempt for do-gooders. He was not a parader of "shallow and preposterous fictions" as Steve had said of another man, a soft-tongued, heartless hypocrite, for Warren was annoyed by this new-found land within himself which had lain there undiscovered. . . . It sure as hell would interfere with Getting On in the world! . . .

Behind San Juan Hill shelter tents had blossomed. On its crest Spanish trenches were being faced about toward today's enemy; the diggers scratched at the stony soil with sticks, meat cans, bayonets—anything but shovels—and ducked the nuisance fire of the Spaniards as they could. Water was a towering want; canteens largely were empty, and several men carrying comrades' empties had been killed going back to the streams. The enemy had attacked in mass once during the night, their uniforms ghostly in the moonlight, but the Gatlings and Colt machine guns had wilted their charge. This attack and the promise of others had made sleeping hard, even though many men were tired to the brink of nervous breakdown; cat naps were the rule except for those turniplike souls who always can manage to sleep anywhere, including such times as when their teeth are being filled.

"Will we stay here?" Warren asked various Americans. "What do you think?"

"Certainly." "I doubt it." "Who knows?" replied the officers.

"Anything but going back into that damn jungle!" said the men.

Rumor had it that the general—Hawkins, of Kent's division—who had been the valiant who led the hottest fighting of the previous day, was for retiring from the exposed ridge. Another whitehead, the peripatetic invalid Wheeler, was for holding on until you could skate across Styx. The divided opinions of all the high muckamucks were discussed widely, and everyone from dock-side recruits up to field officers was saying, "Now if I was Shafter —" The interest of every new rumor was in reverse proportion to the distance to the trenches-of-natural-convenience which, incidentally, certain lovers of lace-curtain words were calling "latrines."

At the salient on the right wing Colonel Roosevelt was quite properly digging in as if he meant to fight it out along this line

if it took all summer, to which others groaned and said, "God forbid!" Parker's Gatling boys were with him, and so was the lanky sergeant with the daffy dynamite gun; "Fort Roosevelt" grew under the broiling sky only twenty degrees from the equator, and "closer'n that to the farrs of hell," one former circuit rider among the Rough Riders told Warren. Sullen shooting by the Spaniards bristled into another heavy attack by midmorning; afterward sniping and long-range cannonading resumed, as did thoughts of home and cold water.

A regular captain with a white beard summed up the general situation with due emphasis on his service prejudices, but in a way which sounded reasonable enough to Warren.

"To be fair, we did not 'drive' the Spaniards from this position," he said slowly. He had a habit of rolling his eyeballs as he ticked off his points, and Warren guessed he must have done penance at some remote time, teaching philosophy at a military academy for incorrigible sons of the rich.

"We cannot take credit for taking what the enemy gave us," the captain said, closing his eyes to set his ducks in a row. "It required a shove by us, but this was only a strong picket line, after all. I doubt if many more than a thousand men held it. Their main lines of resistance are untouched, and I think they will maintain a siege so long as Cervera's fleet remains in the harbor. Also, their most powerful allies—June, July, and August—are at peak strength, and we are an unacclimated horde. The dons probably rely heavily on those deadly supporters; they themselves still suffer in this climate after four centuries of practice.

"No, I don't think we should perch on this exposed, hard-to-supply hill, but should pull back and reorganize and let that damned navy of ours move in to do its share of fighting! Shafter and Linares are at each other's throats merely to save their expensive fleets from being scratched!"

Warren said, "Well, maybe you're right, but I hope for the sake of a quick end to this sad-hello that withdrawal won't be taken for timidity."

The captain eyed him coldly. "Young man, General Shafter may

be sick and he may be something less than a Ulysses Grant, but timid men are not awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor."

"Oh? When did he get that?"

"On the Peninsula, during the War of the Rebellion."

"Well, I'm glad to hear it, but he was younger and leaner then, wasn't he? Not that— Oh, Steve! Steve Crane! I've been looking for you!"

As Tomás had warned, Crane did look bad, and smelled of whisky. He seemed cheerful, however.

"Well, Stretch, me bucko! Say, I have a suggestion. . . ."

A run down to Jamaica on a press boat? It sounded good to Warren—if the old captain's tactical reasoning was sound, no purpose could be served by hanging around the lines for a while. And more than he yearned for riches or fame Warren wanted to souse in a bathtub and have a meal served at a table. At Kingston, besides, he could file an accumulation of battle stories on the cables and bring back limes and canned peaches for Caleb. The doctor at the hospital had said that the wounded cried for such things in their delirium as often as for wife or mother.

"A junket to B.W.I. sounds spiffy, Steve, but can we be back in two days, say?"

"I don't intend to miss anything here, either, you old improper noun!" Crane said. "Santiago is getting reinforcements from Manzanillo soon—oh, there's no mystery about it! The Cubans have been harrying the column. We'll get back on the ball in time for the gala reception. Furthermore, Lawton is in place now on our right, and the siege of Troy has begun."

"I heard as many say we're going to pull back."

"If true, we'd have even more time. Let's push! . . ."

Crane was faithful to his promise that they would not dawdle. On Sunday evening, just a day after they had steamed into Kingston, the *World's* tug sighted Cuba again. The two reporters sat comfortably on deck under an awning, recalling times out of mind when a chair was merely a piece of furniture and not of heaven and when a shave with clear, hot water was a diurnal bore. A feeling of well-being flowed back through Warren; his only worry was for his

friend, whose fever, or whatever it was, would not permit him to eat or rest properly. Crane's blue eyes burned, and he belted at a bottle for nourishment, resenting attempts at interference, of course. Still, both of them had accomplished everything Kingston was good for: baths, a night in bed, hot food, cold drinks, and they had sent off their dispatches, jawing the Negresses at the cable keys for showing a maddening disdain for immediacy. And they had bought limes, canned goods, and—in Crane's case—liquor.

"Free speech, free trade, and free silver," Crane said, toasting Warren and the Cuban shore line.

"Free Cuba and free love," Warren responded absently, raising his binoculars. "Sampson hasn't budged from the harbor entrance. I can make out the Texas, the Oregon—and isn't that ship off left the Brooklyn?"

"'Off left!' What a lubberly way to convey 'port beam,' you swab!" Crane said, refusing the glasses with a gesture. "By the way, Stretch, why are left-handed pitchers crazy? Ever thought about that?"

"No. . . . I think we're going to be paged."

An auxiliary warship eased over to inspect the tug. The gray, businesslike yacht once had been sleek in gold and white, and a millionaire had taken summer ease on her afterdeck, but then the year had been 1897; now, instead of an awning over a rich man, there was a tarpaulin over a gun.

"Ahoy, the deck," Crane said suddenly, feet hitting the planks as he rose. "I know that chap with the megaphone. He tried to help me get into the Navy." Cupping his hands, he shouted, "Bun! That you? What's new?"

"Hi, Steve—haven't you heard?"

"Heard what?"

"Why, Cervera came out this morning!"

"Of course he did!"

"Honest, I mean!" the lieutenant insisted.

"Yes, I know. Where's his fleet now?"

"Sunk!"

"All of it, no doubt?"

"Yes, yes!"

"Who do you think we are—horse marines?"

"But I've told you—aw!" The officer slapped a hand at the sea breeze, turned his back, and disappeared below.

"Fancy!" Crane said. "Yonder rocks our fleet as it has for weeks, every hair and anchor in place, and Bun strains to make a joke about it. I'm disappointed in him."

When they went ashore at Siboney they found that the naval officer had told the truth. The Spanish squadron had sallied through the narrow harbor neck, and down to the last ship lay scattered along miles of ocean floor or was burning in shoal water. Survivors who had been booze-braced for the naval suicide were blundering along the coast in their underwear, drunken and unarmed. Some who did not escape, or who were not taken by the Americans, were being ranged in tidy rows on the beach by Cubans who had shot them. The *mambis* felt proud to have their pictures taken in warlike attitudes over their half-naked trophies.

Crane exploded when he heard Bun's story verified.

"Can you imagine—those smug battleships ate up four armored cruisers and two destroyers while our backs were turned! There they lay when we came back, crouched by the same old mousehole, but the mice were in their stomachs! Dammit, they hadn't even the decency to smile!"

xxiii

A ceiba is a tree with pods which contain kapok, and under the bushy shade of a particular ceiba the capitulation of Santiago was arranged. Not the "surrender," please—meticulous about *pundonor* to the end, the Spaniards stiffly refused to accept the word. However, like Henry of Navarre, who had said that Paris was worth a mass and had traded his Protestantism for a crown, William Rufus Shafter saw no reason to balk at swapping a word for a city, either.

He dickered with the Spanish negotiators somewhat desperately, for during the days when he met with them under *El Arbol de la*

Paz, the tree of the peace, William Rufus's army went to the bowwows. So, too—although he did not know it until later—did that of the defenders within the city's wire and walls. The besiegers went hungry and fell sick by the thousands; the besieged starved and died, too, especially those not in uniform. Santiago had had a head start toward starvation because of the long years of the rebellion; like the rest of the island raptly called "The Pearl of the Antilles," it was pearly only by having been bled white. So, with their commands rotting away behind them, Generals Shafter and Toral sat on the kneelike roots of the giant ceiba politely threatening, cajoling, but most of all bluffing each other, and in the intervals when there was no truce hurled other arguments back and forth which killed a few more soldiers, civilians, and dogs.

The precise words spoken under the tree were not known to the American troops who, by the twelfth of July, had completed surrounding the town, but their essential drift was. The drift of high-echelon conversation usually is known to private soldiers; commanding generals do not get other brass hats to cook for them, nor to police butts around headquarters, just for instance. Hence Caleb and Smoky Stu Woodruff, mending after a fashion on the ship *Olivette*, heard the rumors and thrashed out the strategies of the big operators on their own plane.

"Now if'n I was our Lardbucket," Smoky said, "I'd catch aholt of this here dago by a fistful of shirt and say, 'Lookit here, Josey, why don't you and me settle this argument like men?' I'd say. 'Meet me out in the alley, I dare you,' I'd say. Wouldn't that save a pickle all around, now I ask you?"

Caleb agreed that there was merit to the idea of settling disputes by individual champions, and mentioned examples from the Old Testament, the fables of King Arthur, and Matthew Arnold. Trooper Woodruff was pleased that history had liked his proposal, and enlarged on it with greater confidence. . . . After all, he was so iggerant he had to study out whether "cuss" was spelled with a k, but Foureyes looked genuine interested. . . .

"Yeah, I forgot about David and Goliah, and I never heard of your Soreass and Rustin' gazabos, but those old-timers had a pretty

foxy idea all the same," Smoky said. "Take this here war. Supposing when the bickering got too hot for nobody to enjoy his drinks, like last year—supposing McKinley had told the King of Spain, 'Pardner, let's you and me go fetch our gangs and tussle this out.' Meaning that Mack would of got Congress and the King his passel of lawyers, whatever's their name, and they'd shoot it out."

"Shooting's pretty rough," Caleb said. "Besides, bystanders might get hurt, just as they do now."

"O.K." Smoky said. "Then let them go at it with billies."

"On whose home field?"

Smoky worked out that detail quickly. "Neither's. They could meet in Ireland and be sure of a crowd and also of umpires that'd work for the fun of it."

"I admit it sounds attractive, but how could you be sure the right side would win the discussion?"

"Why, hell, Foureyes, that wouldn't make no difference! By the time them old stuffed shirts got done whaling each other and the papers published pictures of them with lumps, could you keep a straight face? Why, the whole damn world would laugh so hard that they could hear it even in Rooshia!"

"By God, Smoky, considering the shape I'm in, I'd vote for you for President on that ticket!"

"It ain't nothing."

The runt fell to scratching under his sling and chest bandages, and offered to scratch Caleb if he liked, a service which the latter accepted gratefully. When Smoky had worked over their itches he found time to digest an uncomfortable afterthought.

"Nope, it won't work—I forgot something important. You know how a town hires a marshal to gun for tough hombres? Hell's fire, can you imagine what'd happen first thing the President told the Senate, 'Pack your brass knuckles, boys—we got a date?'"

"They'd cat on him?"

"Either that or hire ringers. Why, they'd be more husky ringers, both Yank and dago, show up in Ireland and calling one another 'Your Honor' to give themselves a laugh than——"

"—you could shake a shillelagh at."

"Yeah, and I guess Congress would be crazy not to pay young, dumb, and useless birds like you and me to settle their messes, anyhow. We told them they're right valuable because we elected them, and they believe it."

"Which puts us right back where we started, Smoky."

"Not quite. I ain't back in good old Tucumcari, but I sure wish I was!"

A woman in a starched shirtwaist came along then and gave them glasses of "Red Cross cider," an improvisation of Clara Barton's girls which was compounded of the juice of stewed apples or prunes with limes added. Two days after the Red Cross had pitched in, conditions had improved in the field hospital and on the transports until they were merely miserable. Four days after San Juan and Caney, only men with abdominal wounds upon whom the surgeons operated were sure of dying; for the rest there was a sporting chance despite their diets of dough and "embalmed beef." The so-called hospital ships were the same old transports with few mattresses and no ventilation; the tent hospital at Siboney had no mattresses and many drafts, which blew in the dust from supply trains, the wetness of the daily storms, and mosquitoes by the millions.

Caleb and the wound patients who had been removed to shipboard were luckier; many a man left on shore recovered from Spanish bullets only to be killed by fever. The feculent town of Siboney was set afire by order instead of being cleaned and limed, to the despair of some observers, for despite their dirt the mining shacks had watertight roofs and dry floors, so that by their burnt offering the authorities deprived the sick of the only available protection against the storms. The incendiarism of the doctors struck some of the wounded as overdone punctility, especially when the M.D.s did not seem to mind that if a man were too ill to walk a hundred yards to a latrine he had to depend on passers-by to empty his personal tin can.

Shortly after Caleb was raised aboard the *Olivette*, showing some signs of recovering from his shock paralysis, a yellow-fever camp was pitched two miles north of the razed village. Armed guards

patrolled its quarantine, and any man—or woman—with a temperature was likely to be sent there on general suspicion, to survive or die as luck and his own constitution decreed. The medical aids were quinine, epsom salts, castor oil, and contract doctors who too often were criminally incompetent.

Stephen Crane, in common with every soldier in the trenches, knew this; however ill a man became, he preferred to remain in the lines rather than report on sick call for any reason whatsoever. Like the doughboys, Crane insisted on going about his duties, to Warren Spangler's distress. They had gotten the sick man a polo pony from Jamaica finally, but Warren, who had been told what a centaur his friend was, saw Crane weave and tumble from the saddle.

"Why don't you give up and go back to the States, Steve! Be reasonable!"

"These others can't. . . . I've got to share."

"God damn it, Steve, you're mad!"

But Crane laughed, brushed away protests, and lived on bananas, quinine, and whisky—until the day his friends forcibly loaded him aboard a hospital ship at Daiquiri, raving.

"There is no life, no joy, no pain!" he shouted. "There is nothing but opinion, and opinion be damned! . . . Boy, fetch me a pickle and an ice-cream soda!"

Warren never saw him again, but when Stephen Crane died only two years afterward Warren wept. Crane would stay tall in his mind, and always young; perhaps, Warren thought, Steve himself might have said that it was a good thing when the good died young, for it prevented them from becoming bores. That would have been like Steve, the tender iconoclast, the poet-athlete, the man who had only contempt for any deity that persecuted fools to prove its godhead, and who was reputed to have been—by marsh-mallow-minds he shocked—the bastard of Grover Cleveland.

The final days of the siege of Santiago wore heavily on Warren without Crane, so with his wretchedness unrelieved except by the limited companionship of Tomás, Clarke Davis's instructions came as reprieve.

"Return home should Santiago surrender," his editor cabled. "We may send another man with the Miles expedition to Porto Rico. . . . Refer your question about overediting of your reports, suggest you reread the originals a few months from now and then decide who was right. Personal strain showed in your writing, we felt. Come home when city is taken and sit beside a stream for a while and watch sticks float by. . . ."

The cablegram hardly had time to be soiled in Warren's pocket before he mounted Casey and rode out to the heights of Conosa, the surrender field of Santiago. As the donkey carried him along, his caliper legs dangling to the ground when he forgot to keep them bent, Warren wondered if July seventeenth ever had been historic before. His almanac said the sixteenth was the anniversary of the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem and that the eighteenth would bring an eclipse of the sun invisible at Philadelphia, but said nothing about this happy date. He goggled at the platoons of generals in column, solemnly riding to the towering ceiba tree; they looked scrubbed, down to their swords, which gleamed bravely. Shafter and his chief aide, the tall, thin Lieutenant Miley who had ordered the Army to charge at San Juan, suddenly reminded Warren of how Sancho Panza and Don Quixote might have looked if their ranks had been reversed, and he felt sure the Spaniards would laugh.

A Yankee band stationed near the tree burst into a Sousa march when the generals and their cavalry escort advanced to meet the enemy officers. Warren doubted if his own style on Casey was suited to the occasion, but he was supremely happy over the end of slaughter—along this front, anyhow.

"According to hallowed custom," he wrote, "the grave Spanish general proffered his sword to our commander," but his mind wandered back to the trifling incident of the carriage they had passed at the junction of the Caney Road. The slim-spoked vehicle had come spanking along in the opposite direction, and the cavalry had moved over to allow its driver to take his muslin-clad women passengers by. The troopers' eyes had popped, and they murmured in admiration over—the parasoled ladies in white? No—the wonder

*Property of
Florida
Do Not Remove*

of a smartly turned-out carriage! That shiny rig had cheered the boys, to Warren's amusement, and he had snickered over their, "A carriage, now! Well, that gets me!"

"General Shafter, also acceding to courtesies due the brave, refused the sword of José Toral, and presented him instead with the saber and spurs of the Spaniard's dead comrade-in-arms, the heroic Vara del Rey, leader of Caney's bitter resistance." This, too, Warren wrote, studying the ranks of enemy soldiery as he did so. . . .

There they stood not twenty yards away, brisk enough in blue-and-white and red-and-blue, holding those vicious Mausers at present arms—here now was The Spaniard face to face. The cruel foe, the unseen foe, the valiant foe, but always a creature of mystery who had been so even when lying dead in an abandoned trench. Now the veil was torn, and you saw "young, jolly, rather innocent-looking fellows" who wore sneakers, of all the dodgasted things! . . . And when the ceremonies were finished their trumpeters blew a snappy fanfare and the young men in sneakers marched back into the city to stack their rifles just as if they didn't give a damn! It was rather humiliating to find that The Spaniard was a beardless youngster in soft shoes who looked amiably indifferent to defeat, especially after all the stories one had heard about their fondness for eating infants and raping grandmothers. Warren wondered if he dared ask one of the stolid Yank regulars whether he felt as let down, but decided that the man would think him touched.

"At noon precisely the American flag will be raised over the governor's palace," General Shafter's order of the day had read. "The regimental bands will play 'The Star-Spangled Banner' and the troops will cheer"—oh, that gracious military use of "will"! Warren was rather curious about cheering on command—would it be sprung by a "Ten-SHUT! By the numbers . . . CHEER!" or would there be signalmen to lead the lung artillery by wigwag?

Crochety old Jumbo had been cunning about naval participation in the formalities, too; some said his invitation to Admiral Sampson had been timed to arrive too late, thereby conveying his contempt for the service which had placed the burden of conquest on

his corps. Less amusing to Warren was the commanding general's refusal to admit any Cuban soldiery into the city—although it was full of their families—on grounds that “feeling between Spaniards and Cubans is very bitter.” Garcia must have howled over that; certainly he was reported to be having a monumental case of the sulks.

“Tangle after tangle of barbed wire ringed the approaches to the city, and as we passed through, our officers could not help thanking God that their men had not been ordered to assault the beastly stuff. Only by walking over their own dead could they have breached it.” For all his mistakes and peculiarities, Fatty was stubborn about saving lives, bless him. If he left much to be desired as a tactician, no one could underrate Shafter as a salesman, Warren thought; before sending his literally decimated army against this wire, the general resisted all urging to attack, including some from his superior, Miles, until he had made a stern try at wheeling a victory. Oh, it was true that the Spanish commander, Linares, was wounded and his successor depressed, and that both were willing to “capitulate” honorably, providing their fares were paid back to Spain. It also was evident now to fire-eating critics of Old Butterbutt that some of the cannon protecting the wire bore the date 1724, but Shafter hadn't the advantage of second sight, as his critics would have. The masterminds would set up a bawl: Dickie Davis, the *Journal* people, the Navy, and Sylvester Scovel of the *New York World*. . . .

Sylvester Scovel stood, an intent young man in a yachting cap, waiting with Warren and the other reporters for the cathedral clock in the plaza to proclaim noon. In Santiago's plaza also waited a guard from the Ninth Infantry, a band, a few thousand Santiagans, and photographers and sketch artists ready to record the transmutation of empire. On the roof of the palace facing the hushed square the thin aide of General Shafter waited too, the halyards of a flag in his hands. There was no wind. The silence was hot, tense, impressive.

Sylvester Scovel was thinking . . . thinking perhaps of the sensational trick the Hearst crowd were going to come over him and

his colleagues of the *World*, for ready for pasting on walls throughout the beaten city were stacks of placards: "Remember the *Maine* and Read the *New York Journal*." A pretty clever coup, indeed, while here he stood letting his rivals grab credit for the peace as well as for the war. . . . Then the waiting photographers caught his eye again, and he acted swiftly on a splendid idea.

Sylvester Scovel, too, appeared in the palace roof beside Lieutenant Miley and his flag—if Whistler could sign his paintings with a butterfly, Sylvester Scovel would initial the surrender of Santiago in the eyes of the *World* by his unmistakable yachting cap—*arriba*, Pulitzer!

In the plaza below, a fat man melting in a choker collar espied Sylvester Scovel and his cap.

"Throw that fellow off the roof!" General Shafter ordered two brawny doughboys.

Sylvester Scovel descended under his own power, however, but he was neither a coward nor a man to be humiliated by a mere general of corps. To the amazement of everyone in the still square he advanced on the big-bellied symbol of conquering America and threw a punch at his nose. General Shafter just did dodge.

The ancient clock in the cathedral tower creaked, and struck.

"Pre-sent . . . H'ARMS!"

Sabers flashed to salute; rigidly staring past their rifle barrels, the men in the ranks saw the flag begin to rise. Their regimental band crashed into the stirring old drinking song which is the anthem of the United States, and only some of the surly natives failed to feel a prickle of pride along their spines.

The flag climbed slowly up the staff, clinging to it as if bashful. In the distance the guns of Captain Capron saluted the flag the gunners could not see, but the troops on San Juan yelled so thunderously that those in the plaza heard them.

The soldiers below the flag did not cheer, since men at attention may not, but men at attention can think. Some found themselves hoping that the limp bundle of sovereignty now near the peak of its staff would brace up and not look so durn dejected.

At the last moment it caught a breeze and rolled out.
The cameras clicked.

In the public square of Santiago, Sylvester Scovel stood on a pedestal from which a statue had been removed. On his way past to look around the captured city Warren Spangler said:

"Remind me to tell you the inspiring story of St. Simeon Stylites sometime, Sylvester."

Perhaps if the bayonets of his guards had not looked so sharp, or if the pillar in the sun on which they kept him had not been so high, perhaps the hot-tempered Sylvester Scovel might have attempted to dot another nose.

xxiv

The first glimpse the proprietor of the New York *Journal* had of the shining mountains and royal palms of the Cuban coast had sent him thrills.

"My God! How could this paradise have been abandoned to mere savages?" a friend heard him exclaim.

When the *Journal's* chartered yacht took him home after a few weeks in paradise he had the shakes, his pulse fluttered one hundred and forty to the minute, and his eyes were two fried eggs. He leaned over the rail of the *Sylvia* and shook his fist at the same serene mountains and palms.

"My God!" Mr. Hearst groaned, "how can even savages live there?"

In Caleb Hawkins's case he was asleep when his ship steamed out of Santiago, nor had he strength for valedictory even if he had been awake. He could not have stood at the rail, either, for Caleb could not walk. After grim tussles of will which left him gasping and which produced no better results with his legs than a spasmodic jerking, Caleb had thought of killing himself. He would not stand the indignity of being helpless!

But the thought of suicide was a passing despair, for his sanity

had allies, oddly grouped as allies often are: two were his father and an attack of malaria, and the third was a woman. The third was probably most important; the male ego shows remarkable adjustability when its buttons are respaced by knowing female fingers. However, first came the fever.

The seeds of malaria in his blood bore their crops of chills-and-willies during his convalescence, and it was right after regaining his senses from the first onslaught that Caleb discovered that he could move his arms. His shock-stunned nerves were recovering, but Caleb always swore that the curse of swamp fever was the blessing which began the cure of his paralysis. It scarcely matters whether he was wrong, for he believed, and belief is a powerful drug, allopathic for many things from Christian Science to horse racing. Faith of any kind was a newness to Caleb, and, like a Janissary or a rake turned monk, he was far fiercer in his conviction than if he had been born to it. By the end of July, when he sailed for the States, he could move his head, turn his body, and feed himself, great victories for his soul despite—or because of—intermittent bouts with shivers and sweats.

George Fox Hawkins pulled wires to have his son released to his care, partly because he was his son and equally because to George healing was a duty. When he had seen Caleb's name published among the list of wounded George had gone into action, even unto the temple gates of Moloch.

"Thee does not need my son for thy army," he told a colonel in the War Department. "Thee has said that the nature of his wound makes future—um—service, thee calls it—makes this unlikely. Therefore allow me to relieve thee of responsibility for him."

George won. Ranting thousands of relatives of the volunteers were making an already hard life hell for Washington, but George's method of using pull was neater because it was unhysterical; Quaker-like, it gave where it would receive, and made calmness a sword which cut red tape where bluster would have failed. The wounded and sick were coming north on tourist railroad cars, he said, and went sometimes eight days without a change of their dressings. To relieve this the City of Philadelphia and the Uni-

versity Hospital had supplied and manned a real hospital train; George purposed to underwrite another of a hundred beds, personally if necessary, to make the way easier for homeward bound cripples. The colonel of the Surgeon-General's Department refused the train, but the offer impressed him—if a little pink rabbit like Mr. Hawkins, who certainly was no Carnegie or Vanderbilt, was willing to go into hock, and not just for his lad alone—well . . .

The medical authorities at Siboney got word to expedite passage on sick furlough of Caleb P. Hawkins, trooper, First Volunteer Cavalry, and Washington notified the father that his son would be consigned to his charge until mustered out. George also was told that Caleb would sail on the *Saratoga* arriving in Tampa the sixth of August, which was a trifling stumble among the fat boots made in the conduct of the war. Caleb, aboard the *Yucatan*, arrived in Tampa a week before his father.

(Extracts from a dispatch by Warren Spangler, his last, to the Philadelphia Public Ledger.)

Kingston, Jamaica, B.W.I., August 2—Santiago de Cuba, newest metropolis of the American Empire, no doubt will take the palm for being the dirtiest, despite the keenest competition from the mainland. It has maintained its slovenly reputation even among the seamiest cities of this island. Whoever the American governor may be, he will have his talents as administrator and whitewing tested to the utmost by streets never more than thirty feet wide, which are festering cesspools. Mango skins, ashes, bones—sometimes human—garbage, rags, dung, and flies are everywhere. Night walkers risk falling into pits of such corruption on the unlighted calles—this is a great heritage of centuries of Spanish rule.

Everywhere, too, are puny children with gas-bloated bellies, scabrous cripples, and the aged—except for the Spanish garrison there seem to be few people of vigorous years among the thousands whom the army and Red Cross now are feeding. Miss Barton's ship was the first American vessel to enter the harbor after the city's fall; the notes of the Doxology froze in her nurses' throats when they saw the creatures who were waiting on the pier. . . . Hunger is

far more immoral than any private vice. One's blood congeals to see a mob of children claw one another in utter silence to be first in a soup line.

Even the garrison troops fought like curs over hardtacks our men threw to them; they say they had been forced to plunder in the city by night for food which the merchants withheld except at merciless prices. Our soldiers, however, are generous with their rations, which have increased in regularity since the port was captured; certainly a button from the uniform of a Spaniard, especially of one who fought with *Batalón Constitución* at Caney, will make any American deprive himself of a day's grub. . . .

The sickness which broke out among the refugees who jammed into Caney rages here now. They brought epidemic disease back home with them to their vile alleys; a few months ago a city with fortyfive thousand people, Santiago now counts thirty thousand, we are told. The dying fall too fast for the ordinary undertaking services, so they are being buried by their own families or are being piled in stacks, drenched with coal oil, and burned. At all hours throughout the ugly, yellow-walled streets one hears weeping.

The Anglo-American Club has reopened to accommodate American military and civil officials, since there is no hotel. In contrast to the stricken spirit of the city, there is music and social conversation at the club, not in any mood of which our gallant Captain Philip would have to say, "Don't cheer, boys, the poor devils are dying!" but in simple hope of respite. The mind reels on unmitigated horror. Men who have tales to tell of the Egyptian Sudan, of the Argentine pampas, or of the Klondike, gather here to pool and eat their beans and other camp foods to the plashing of the fountain in the patio. The music they have is their own voices; when they sing "On the Banks of the Wabash" the weeping of the women in the streets fades out, although everyone knows it still is there.

Personal: have arranged passage on a British boat leaving here for Key West tomorrow. Probably will arrive in Philadelphia about Monday next. Please notify my parents and Miss Susan Brecht, address of latter Orthodox near Penn, Frankford. Question for Mr. Davis: what stream is there anywhere which a man may sit by that won't have memories afloat on it?

PART IV

Fall: Tampa and Philadelphia

*Most of the soldiers have left us. . . . We
hear no more abuse of our climate . . . and
our henroosts can go unlocked at night.
Come to Port Tampa to live!*

*—Editorial in the Busy South,
Port Tampa, Florida, 1898.*

*If the day ever comes when logic will per-
suade as easily as it preaches and proves, the
face of the earth will be altered, and Phila-
delphia may change with the changing world.*

—Agnes Repplier, 1898.

"I never thought to see the day when kin of mine would spoil to bring a bluecoat to stay under my roof!"

Colonel Evers pounded the newel post, but he hesitated on the lowest step instead of marching upstairs. His womenfolk had on their cold-fish expressions, so he thought he had better have the matter out with them now. Otherwise he was sure they would find ways of bushwhacking him for weeks.

"I beg your pardons for raising my voice," he said. "However, may I remind you that we do not know this young man, despite your faith that he is a gentleman, Rowena. I'm particularly surprised at you, Genevieve, taking so much for granted."

"Indeed?" said Mrs. Evers. "Well, let me tell you I've got intuitions about things, and don't go a-blunting them with whisky or go running off to an old tower when young men seem interested in my daughter well enough to come calling, as this one did when he was here before, but-a you wouldn't——"

"I was aware this Hawkins had called, I think," the colonel said, "if I have him placed correctly among the crush of strangers that have visited us during the past few months. However, the question of inviting him to—ah—recuperate here is another matter. What scheme have you in mind, Rowena?"

"Scheme, suh? I resent the word!"

Her father laughed shortly, turning to his wife. "Genevieve, I

appeal to your reason: be cautious about a man with fever. For all that's marked on his tag, it could be yellow fever. If you two pant to succor the wounded, by all means continue your good works down at the hospital, but don't turn this house into one by bringing home some strange rascal to——"

"Papa, suppose Mistuh Hawkins was a Virginian. What then?"

"I fail to see the pertinence of——"

"You hush, Speer, and let Rowena finish!"

"Well, do-God!" said the colonel. "Look who's sensitive about letting anybody finish a sentence around this place!"

Rowena hastened to make her point before the shocked Genevieve should forget the topic at issue and give her husband hark-from-the-tomb.

"Mistuh Hawkins wears the same-identical uniform many a southern gentleman is a-wearing, including our own General Wheeler under whom he fought. So there!"

She nodded sharply, and her father found her pinkened face perplexing, for Rowena fussed so seldom. Now, if it were just his wife snapping, that would be ordinary, but to have both females baying was uncomfortable.

He surrendered. "Very well, bring your Yankee home. Anything for peace in the family, with or without honor!" With which he turned and climbed to his tower for its solaces of sour mash and memories of Robert E. Lee.

Thus the way was prepared for Caleb to spend only a few hours in a Tampa military hospital after his ship docked. The hospital commandant found no reason to hold him when his orders read sick furlough, and when the two ladies who were interested in the soldier were known to him. The commandant complimented them for their humanity and was gratified to release a cot in his crowded wards by pleasing local women. Rowena sent a wire to Philadelphia to tell Caleb's family he had arrived, and her mother bossed the orderlies who loaded him into an ambulance.

For Caleb's part, he was satisfied too. Any man who has been in an army hospital is glad to exchange the best of that cold care for a whiff of the Outside, and Caleb's care had not been the best.

"To think that we should meet again under these pathetic conditions, poor boy!" Rowena said, fluffing a bolster under his shoulders. "Hitch! There! You never wrote to me, you faithless man—I bet you forgot me."

Caleb hummed:

*Says she, 'Young man, you're nothing but a kid,'
Says she, 'You'll remember me.' And, b'God, I did!*

"What's that?"

"Cowboy song I learned. You just put me in mind of it. Look, darling, I always meant to write but couldn't find time or paper or something."

"You promised on your honor."

"How could I forget you, considering?"

"Oh, our last meeting? That? Pooh, pooh, pooh, pooh!"

She teased his lips lightly with her own, then puttered with details of the guest room, tossing him fond glances over her shoulder which did not entirely entrance him. For a fleet moment Caleb saw himself as a doll-baby who for a few adorable days would be huggable, rockable, and perhaps even diaperable, but his bones ached too much for him to shudder. Second thought made doll-babyhood seem half attractive; an army wardmaster with squirting-tobacco leaking down his stubble never cuddled his patients, hunks of tainted meat that they were.

"If you had kept in touch, at least when you knew you were coming back to Tampa"—in Rowena's mouth the town always was Tay'm-pa—"well, it wouldn't have been just accident that we saw you when we were helping men off that awful boat."

"Nobody ever had any writing paper down in Cuba," Caleb insisted.

"Anyhow, I've got you here now. Aren't you glad?"

"Yes indeed. Why have you?"

"Dear boy. . . ."

She kissed him again. Standing in the doorway unnoticed, Colonel Evers saw the kiss, and it annoyed him; however, he knew Rowena was past the years when a father might have to fear that

she did not know what she was doing. Once he had been as innocent as most male parents are, but the colonel now understood that even a man's own daughter is a woman, as Messalina, Joan of Arc, Frances Willard, and Little Egypt had been. As his wife Genevieve had been—no, no, was, according to her lights as all the rest are to theirs.

Rowena, rising from her knees by the bed, saw him and said coolly, "Come in, Papa. Caleb, the few times you were here before, you never saw much of my father, I expect."

"How do you do, sir?" Caleb said in evening-dress tones, and made a representation of a bow.

The formality reassured the old man somewhat; at least the young Yankee was not a squirt.

The colonel bowed too. "I manage, suh, I manage. How, may I ask, do you do?"

"I'm coming along famously, Colonel." Caleb stared a moment at motes dancing in a lance of late sun which slashed through the curtains and then said, "I can't thank you properly for your hospitality, sir. True southern hospitality is the phrase for your graciousness, I believe, but when there's so much 'hospital' emphasis on it, your kindness is especially affecting."

The colonel murmured a disclaimer of virtue and clasped his hands behind his coattails. Caleb smiled, and the old man suddenly realized that he was a rather good-looking lad, for a Yankee.

"Nevertheless," the young man said, "you have taken me into your home as if I were your own son, and I shall not forget it."

Colonel Evers had to rummage for words among the thoughts Caleb's voice had set tumbling.

"We are—we are honored to show service to a gallant soldier, whoever's son he may be,—son."

He rubbed his chin whiskers with an expression on his face as if he were listening to his own words, then bowed again and stalked from the darkening room.

That evening the foolscap of *Genl. Lee and Others* lay unregarded under the colonel's hands after he had made several useless attempts to concentrate on it. . . . If Philip had lived, if only

Philip had lived, he would have made a fine soldier! He'd have been—do-God!—forty years old now, and a full colonel in truth, perhaps, as his daddy was by courtesy. And a father also? No doubt, no doubt, and his own father a granddaddy. Incredible! Incredible to think, too, that Philip would have begun to show gray hairs. The Yankee lad downstairs hadn't silvered; he had the curly brown hair the colonel remembered so well of a child in Richmond long ago. Might Philip have worn glasses? Possibly—young men's eyes didn't seem to be as strong as they were in the colonel's youth. Philip would have been taller than young Hawkins, since he would have favored his father, even though, so far as you could tell when Hawkins was helpless in bed, he seemed well set up. Good shoulders. Engaging smile. Philip had been able even at age seven to disarm and devastate with *his* smile! "As if I were your own son," Philip Hawkins had said. Oh, the lost one, the lost one, and all the dead, dry years! . . .

Rowena was pleased but puzzled at the interest her father showed in Caleb during the next few days. Caleb enjoyed the attention of the master, too, and seemed to cotton to Papa as much as Papa had taken to him. They had personal experiences in war to talk about and obviously believed that their dialogues must be interesting to her, when they thought of her at all. Papa's war had been bigger and Caleb's was newer, so they respected each other; Papa set up the Chickahominy campaign with bricabrac on Caleb's counterpane, and at another time laughed like a natural fool when Caleb told of stalking General Wheeler. Imagine Papa laughing at a thing like that! Well, imagine Papa *laughing*!

The old man took fruit to the convalescent, including mangoes from an Evers tree, expecting to delight Caleb, but his consternation dissolved into new laughter when he heard why a soldier just back from Cuba turned green-sick at the sight of mangoes.

Most startling of all Papa's doings was trading his description of the siege of Petersburg and the entrance of the Federals into Richmond for Caleb's account of the investment of Santiago. Not once had Rowena heard her father talk of that disaster; now sud-

denly he seemed to find it merely a conversation piece to interest a fellow soldier.

Genevieve kept tabs on her husband when hour after hour passed without the usual flights to the tower. "I do believe he has forgotten he needs his poison," she whispered to her daughter, "unless he's being foxy and been pulling on a bottle downstairs somewheres, but I can't smell anything at arm's length, and—a—Lordamercy!—the man even shaves without having to be petitioned!"

On the third day of Caleb's stay the old man said, "I'll despise seeing you leave, son. It's been a revelation to have a young man to talk to."

"Believe me, sir," Caleb said, "I'm beginning to dislike the idea of leaving, myself. I've never eaten, slept, or chattered so pleasantly in my life."

Rowena, overhearing, pinched herself to recall the bleakness with which her father had greeted the proposition of having a damyankee around the place. She contained comment, however, and smiled on them. A moment later a bit of talk between the men lit up her bewilderment.

"Satisfy my curiosity, Caleb," the colonel said, "—what does the 'P' of your name stand for?"

"Parrish. My mother's maiden name."

"How now! I thought it was for Philip. I was—strange, I was almost positive I'd heard or——"

Rowena glanced quickly at her father when his voice trailed off, and then she knew.

Caleb pushed hard against his bed's headboard, unaware of his reincarnation. "Look!" he said. "I can move my legs enough now to get some real zingo out of a stretch! . . . Speaking of Philips, though, I knew one—my mother's father. He was a grand old boy. Died when I was little, but I remember his beard and his pickaback rides and the shadow pictures he threw on my bedroom wall when I had measles. He taught me to tell time then too. He was about your height, Colonel, and . . ."

While Caleb talked Rowena watched her father, and tears came

to her—he was happy Caleb had known a Philip, even one who had been an old man, a Quaker, and a Yankee. He listened eagerly because the beloved name had been a beloved, which was enough. . . .

In the hall, after they had left the sickroom, the colonel said to Rowena:

“I wish we had put our friend in The Boy’s room. It would have been airier than this one—when the windows were opened, of course.”

“It didn’t occur to me to suggest it, Papa.”

“No, of course not. . . . I wish he could stay longer than another week, or whatever it’s going to be, but maybe moving him across the hall would be worth while anyhow—what do you think?”

“Let’s do, Papa!”

“It’s right nice, having a young fellow around the place. Howard Joe Bates—well, he wasn’t young enough to make me think of him as—you know, a son—but more like a contemporary.”

“Yes, Papa. I often thought so too.”

After dinner Caleb began to feel queer. He felt brittle—if raised and dropped, he thought he might shatter like a goblet.

The family had gathered in his room to hear the colonel read a section from his *Memories*, “The Mystery Revealed of the Disappearance of the Holograph Original of Genl. Lee’s Farewell to the Army of Northern Virginia,” a sacred writing which the colonel professed to have acquired—never mind how. Rowena and her mother were fascinated, for the old man had not consented to read any of his manuscript for years, let alone propose such a thing. Caleb lay back on his pillows pretending attention so as not to attract any, because it was embarrassing to feel shatterable. He tried to get his mind off himself by occupying it with a variety of thoughts while the colonel droned on, his rimless bifocals bobbing on the bulb of his nose. Now and then the old man would interrupt his reading to chuckle and stroke his goatee, saying, “A telling point, that,” or, “Sound sense! Sound sense!” Then he would lean into the lamplight again and continue. . . .

The colonel's Morris chair and the lamp bespoke the goodness of home, Caleb thought. The lamp shade under which the colonel's face perspired and tiny bugs went crazy was octagonal, had grapes and leaves leaded into a red glass background, and its mantel burned with a hiss—probably from a hole in it. The red lamp recalled to Caleb a spring night during his college days, a night when a group of Epsilon brothers had lurked behind a hedge to hear what would happen to an upstate greenhorn they'd sent to a parsonage to ask for Kitty—or for Nance, if Kitty were already upstairs.

"Oh, you'll know the place," they'd told their country brother who had confessed to an itch of sorts. "Their trademark's a red glass lamp on a table by the front window. Don't let the madam fool you—she lets on at first like the girls actually are her own kiddies."

Caleb smiled weakly, remembering. Well, most houses everywhere had red or green glass lamps, and the Everses' was no exception. Because people were custom-bound, even absurdities were proper if they were traditional. The Evers house had steep gables to shed Florida's snows, for example, and the portico was "fraught with columns" which held up nothing in particular, because any other look about a house wouldn't make it seem like Home to them. Evidences of Rowena's appliqué were everywhere on the heaps of cushions; some woman in every American family specialized in dust traps of which the household was proud: burnt-leather work, cigar-band mosaics, or passe partouts "hung low about the walls with charming artistic irregularity," as the stylemongers put it. There almost always was a whatnot above a corner seat, from which an unwary head might knock Uncle Waldo's collection of garnets and spars or Cousin Hermione's souvenirs of the Columbian Exposition. The oak paneling downstairs undoubtedly was dadoed; probably the piano had its tasseled throw; the dining room should have a plate rail and a still life of a fish and a bowl of fruit; and because they were so pretty, the screens on the parlor windows probably were painted with Venetian canal scenes or Fujiyama. And since the genteel tradition called for trophies of field and

stream, there would be a stuffed, varnished fish—tarpon down here—a moth-eaten puma head, and English sporting prints in the library as surely as the Complete Waverley Novels in calf. In this room, Caleb saw, were the “Weaker Sex” cartoons of Charles Dana Gibson, *passe-partouted*, of course, while in the hallway facing him hung Custer’s Last Fight by O. Becker out of Budweiser.

Caleb’s head throbbed, but he gritted his teeth and determined to outthink the oncoming attack of fever. One couldn’t, he knew, but one could try. . . . Bless the old colonel! He usually wasn’t this dull—ordinarily he talked free of parables and homilies, which was refreshing in a man of his years. Now if this were home, Caleb felt, his father’s grave attentions would become unbearable, and to his mother his wound would be a reproach to her pacific upbringing and a source of tears for her failure. They meant well, but—God, to have to lie helpless and have them suffer over him!

His ears began to roar like surf, and he felt suddenly lightheaded. The colonel’s sonorous reading broke through the surf like one of those Cuban drums—*bongo? tumbador?*—anyhow, the kind Horace had gotten hold of and tried to rumbumbumble. The surf was hot; the red lamp heated it. Now a green lamp might be . . .

“Are you feeling puny, son?”

The colonel put aside his manuscript and peered over his spectacles. The two women rose tentatively from their rockers.

Caleb gave them a glazed smile. “A green lamp might make a cooler drum,” he said. Then he closed his eyes, feeling that no one could have been plainer than he.

“What was that about a cool drum?”

“Lordamercy, his forehead is burning up!”

“Rowena, go fetch some fresh water!”

They sat with Caleb while he tossed and mumbled, wiping his face with cloths wrung out in cold water, and when he clawed at the sheets they held his hands. He bruised their fingers in his delirious strength, but that was not why Genevieve burst into tears and, with remarkable docility, obeyed her husband’s command to go to bed.

“The fire! The fire!” the sick man had cried. “Can’t anyone feel it? There’s fire in here, a sea of fire!”

His mutterings about Indians, country mice, gloves, and what all had meant nothing to Genevieve, and a hoarse shout about General Lee in a low-cut opera gown overshot Rowena, but fire recalled Richmond, and the panic scream of it broke Genevieve.

Rowena went to her room, too, when her father suggested it, to catch sleep for a tour of duty later if he should call. She had undressed and lain down to rest, if not to sleep—that being unlikely—and when she felt a touch on her shoulder she said:

“I’m awake.”

“Come,” her father whispered. “He needs help.”

“What time— Oh dear, how can that be? It’s three! How is he?”

“Cold. The fever’s gone, and he’s cold now.”

“Oh dear!”

“I don’t know what to do.”

The skin of the sick man felt clammy under Rowena’s palm, and as she withdrew her hand he shivered in a convulsion which squeaked the springs. She smoothed his pillow and covers, biting her lip—what useless putterings, she thought, but what was there to do?

The colonel said, “I put a blanket on, but it doesn’t warm him.” In the shadows the old man’s cheeks were sunken like those of the invalid, and his voice sounded pettish. It had a tautness, too, a veiled urgency Rowena felt but did not understand.

“Papa, he’s shaking so!”

“Yes, yes, I said the blanket does no good!”

“But how can he be cold in this weather?”

“It’s the trick of the fever. I hate to just stand and watch!”

The sick man said something senseless, trembled, and the bed-springs chattered again. The clicking of his teeth set the watchers’ on edge; the colonel swore under his breath and tugged at his beard; Rowena shuddered in sympathy, drawing her night robe closer about herself.

“I can’t bear this, Papa, and I won’t.”

Over the red lamp they passed a question unspeaking, and when the colonel did speak, his voice rasped.

"I know. Why do you suppose I——" He stopped, embarrassed to think she might need an explanation, although he thought he had read a clear understanding in her eyes over the lamp.

"I know too, suh," she said.

To cover his confusion he became brisk. "Well, try! Try, then! Get in with him!"

"You're sure?"

"Damn, yes! You won't be a woman—you'll be a stove, a medicine! But let me leave first. I——"

"I'm not embarrassed, Papa."

"Well, I am! No, I'm not, but——"

"He'll never know, tonight. Oh—will Mother?"

"I'll stand watch."

"But he'll know soon. . . ."

"Hey?"

"I'm going to marry him, Papa."

"You're going—oh! Well, well!"

"He doesn't know that yet, either, but this will help."

The colonel hesitated, then went to the door, whispering over his shoulder, "Tell me how it works."

He heard the bedsprings and then an answering whisper.

"It's going to work, Papa."

The colonel closed the door.

There were straight-backed chairs at intervals along the length of the hallway, and the old man tilted back in one against the wall beside the guest-room door.

"Damned blasted chairs!" muttered the colonel, folding his arms. "Built for silly women to buy—not for human buttocks to sit in!"

He calmed himself by staring down into the shadows of the hall. A mouse scratched somewhere within the wall back of his head, but the rest was silence until he himself chuckled abruptly.

"True southern hospitality!" Colonel Evers said aloud, and then chuckled again.

George Fox Hawkins went back to Philadelphia after a short but meaty visit with his son in Tampa, and told his wife he was con-

tented that Caleb would not be coming North until after he should be married and more fully recovered from his wound.

"Naturally his decision was a surprise for me," George said, "and I might have preferred him to have chosen a Philadelphia girl, but I quickly saw that I could not dissuade him."

Mr. Hawkins sighed. "Why has it always been, Lydia, that our son cherishes an opinion the hotter for our opposition? Ah well—his very determination to marry Miss Evers may be all for the best. Her father argued, too, that the climate would benefit his health, which I believe. Caleb was recovering from a severe attack of malarial fever when I arrived, but I understood from Mr. Evers that Miss Evers nursed him through it as no professional would have."

"Doesn't thee mean Mrs. Bates, George?"

"She said she wanted to be called Miss Evers again for the interval between now and their marriage, just to please Caleb."

"But she was married?"

"Yes, Lydia, but her husband died."

"Ah."

"Did thee think she had been divorced? I have already told thee that, for all its military cast, her family is not the kind to tolerate such immorality. Do endeavor to concentrate when I tell thee things, Lydia!"

"This matter has been very perplexing, George. Forgive me."

Mr. Hawkins frowned, pursed his lips, and studied the rug. "True, true. I am not clear myself who first introduced our son to these Everses, nor why he did not tell us about her, and when Miss Evers made remark of the pure, sweet flame between them, Caleb threw back his head and laughed."

"He did?"

"Yes, and he said, 'God knows she's right enough, Father,' which was odd of him, I thought."

"I am glad he chose a delicate lady, George. I should say, a lady of delicacy, since thee says she is wholesomely healthy."

Mr. Hawkins agreed, adding that he was relieved also that there had been no more contention about a legal career.

"Mr. Evers's orange farm interests the boy, and since he has engaged to invest his own money in it, I feel he has settled down at last. As partners, they expect to increase acreage without duplicating either equipment or caretaking labor."

"Do orange farmers prosper, George?"

"I shall inquire, Lydia. At any rate, it will occupy Caleb. I fear that only such an enterprise is likely to retain his interest, because I judge that the sun, the soil, and the Negroes do all the hard work."

Lydia patted her white cap with a hand that trembled. "I only wish he could raise oranges nearer to Philadelphia," she said.

"They will visit us every summer, and when Caleb is able to travel they will make a delayed honeymoon trip here this fall for the symphony concerts and for the New York theaters."

"Dear, dear—concerts and playgoing!"

"It is not for us to judge his errors, Lydia."

"No, George. . . . Someday I should like to see Florida myself, if thee doesn't mind."

"We shall." Mr. Hawkins raised a tumbler in which he had put torn scraps of paper to soak, and looked into it.

"I must speak to Shoemaker tomorrow about this," he said. "The fecklessness of throwing away a full half-dozen misdirected envelopes without removing the uncanceled stamps!"

"Thy nephew should be more saving."

"Well, at least he works hard in the shops and shows a commendable disregard of soiling his hands when he must—as our Caleb never did."

"He will make thee a good manager someday, George."

"Yes, providing that he empties his mind of nonsense about building gasoline buggies—ever since he heard that the Studebaker people are wasting their time with the contraptions, he has been difficult to control."

"He will learn, George."

"So I have told him. One must look with caution toward the broader aspects of such dangerous dabbling, I have said. It is easy for anyone to see that horseless carriages are impractical, which

Shoemaker hotly denies, but even he must reluctantly agree that there is no leisure class in this country, as there is in Europe, to enjoy the machines the year around."

"He is young; he will heed thee in time, George."

"Perhaps. Caleb never has."

"Do not blame yourself, George. Thee has been a good man and father."

"For the life of me, I cannot understand why Caleb never listened! Young men today are so—so contentious with their elders. I tremble for the world they'd build, indeed I do!"

xxvi

During his absence, Warren learned, Susan had cropped through Chambers's Encyclopedia to DION-FRIC and was richer for parts of A-BEA, BEA-CATA, and CATA-DION; but if she still was keen for self-improvement, she wasn't so touchy about being ribbed up on her passion.

"You inspire me," he said. "I think I shall try something grand myself—maybe grow a mustache."

She laughed. "Do that. Your mind deserves a rest."

My, it was good to see her! After reporting to his office and drawing banked pay, Warren had splurged on a cab to Frankford, arriving in time to prevent Susan from returning to the Arsenal after lunch.

"Don't worry about working no more today," Gus Kelley said to her. "I'll square it with Dungan. For two pins I'll knock off meself and get the inside stuff on Cuba."

Ma Brecht hustled him out of the house. "August Kelley," she said, "you'd be as welcome in the pallor this afternoon as a case of diptheria. Now, skiddoo!"

The change apparent in his sweetheart was a slight loss of weight from long working hours, Warren saw, but he had not been with her ten minutes before he sensed other, subtler ones. There was the dry laugh with which she had dismissed his joshing about

studying an encyclopedia, and there was the frank way she looked him straight in the eye. She'd hugged and kissed him on her own account when he had arrived, too, without concern for the sour view taken of such unseemly displays by boiler-plate authorities in the etiquette columns. . . . Now could it be, he thought, that Susie had grown securer within herself by reading A-BEA through CATA-DION, or had she been able to search her heart for the honesty and innocence she used to be ashamed of?

When they sat together alone they spurted talk about the pica-yune subjects which come most readily to the tongues of two people needing time to refind each other. Warren told of Casey's "conversations" with Jorge Astilloso, and then he listened with a devotion unwarranted by the subject when Susan told him about a motion-picture show she had seen at the Bijou. They talked also about Stephen Crane, of Donohue's no-hit, no-run game against Boston, of mutual friends who were vacationing at Eagle's Mere, and of the likelihood that there would be a Nicaraguan canal. When neither could find further excuse for prolonging their half-shy idiocies, Warren reached for Susan, kissed her silent, and fell quiet himself. While they sat enwrapped on the sofa, dreaming comfortably, Peteykins trilled arpeggios from the kitchen because Ma Brecht was running the tap; both sounds were ineffably ordinary, Warren thought, but they were assurances of haven. There was a smell from the kitchen, too, of the morning's baking, of fresh fruit pies set out to cool, and Warren thought how utterly impossible it was for him to have been in Cuba only a week before.

Susan moved in his arms. "Isn't it too warm to sit close?"

"Good old muggy Philly weather!"

She snuggled again, saying, "Happy?"

"Oh, joy!"

"I am too—very."

"I missed this—and you—I missed you like the dickens," he said.

"I don't want to leave you again. At least, not without knowing y-you will be waiting for me."

"I was waiting."

"Not as my wife."

"I might as well have been."

"It's not the same."

"No. . . . Oh, Warren, I dreaded you'd be killed, or even—that I'd never see you again."

"I didn't hunt danger."

"Did you always run from it?"

"Whenever I got the chance, hon."

"I'll bet." For a time she remained quiet, and he filled the interval by smelling her hair. Then she said, "Warren, separation is terrible, but it did one good thing for me. I had time to think—oh, about everything."

"Sounds comprehensive enough, Susie."

"Shut up! I want to say something. Would you know what I meant if I said that I began to understand me-myself a lot better because I had you to worry about?"

"Ummm, maybe."

"Perhaps he'll be a hero and never come back, I used to think, and the thought frightened me cold. Yet I know there was a time when ideas like that were drippy mooning which—well, I guess I enjoyed the horrible things without knowing I did. I'm ashamed to admit it, but I must."

"Susie——"

"Let me finish, dear. Or I'd say, 'Perhaps something about me makes him ashamed of me now, down at bottom,' and I began to think what they were. The foolish, stupid poses that used to make you put on That Look, remember? And while I was thinking about them I was thinking like I was outside myself somehow, and——"

Warren's eyes were stars, but he felt too good to give her a throaty answer. Instead he interrupted to say:

"'Like' ain't a conjunction, honey, and you need the p-past subjunctive in that sentence, that wonderful sentence."

She gave him a straight look and a smile.

"Thank you, Professor, and twentythree for you! I was almost finished anyhow, except to say that I knew I loved you and made up my mind to tell you without having to be coaxed."

She held his eyes when she said it, too, and held for an instant more until she couldn't stand the heat.

Ma Brecht came in then to interrupt a robust clinch and dratted herself for not peeping like a gentlewoman before busting in.

"The pallor," she said by way of apology, "ain't generally the mush room by day. Excuse me."

Warren swelled with foolish energy. He roared with laughter and raised Margaret two feet off the floor to kiss her.

"The parlor's m-more than a m-mush room, Ma! It's bewitched—it's turned your gentleman caller into a son-in-law, p-p-presto!"

"Land!"

Susan said, "Don't be taken in, Ma. He's taking a lot for granted. He hasn't asked me in so many words yet."

"How did I miss? S-Susie, I—we——"

"Will you marry me, Warren?"

"Well, I'll be d-d-d——"

"Will you, please?"

"You bet I will, b-but let me b-buy the license or something, will you? . . . Ma, she's shameless!"

"Lord!" Margaret said, and tossed her apron over her head to weep ecstatically.

"Aw, cheer up, Ma," Warren said. "It's just another marriage. It'll only l-last a lifetime."

They decided they would need a few weeks to prepare the accessories to their wedding, like the furniture and Warren's relatives, and the bemused fellow was grateful for the way Susan remembered amenities and tackled the practicalities he overlooked. It was she who suggested a late fall date when she heard that Warren's uncle Charley and his wife were coming East from California for their first visit in years. Meanwhile, Susan said, they could plan and save toward household goods, and she and Ma could do some sewing. In fact, Susan insisted, it was all wellangood to be impatient and fiery about getting married, but there wasn't too much time to turn around in, even though she quit at the Arsenal. A person had to scour central Philadelphia for a likely house, and

gather together a kind of trousseau, and what all. The complexities dazed Warren; he had thought that people who agreed to marry just upped and married, boom!

They visited Lancaster, and Susan was enchanted with the old town and by Warren's family. The Spangler clan came to meet the new candidate for their name on her first Sunday there. Aunt Clay brought a pie; Elizabeth and Our Frieda—"Our" because her mother had been Frieda first—brought their husbands and kids; James Spangler came down from Reading with the Spangler appetite and a kiss for the bride-to-be. The horde of Warren's nieces and nephews ate in the kitchen with fair amicability, shepherded by the oldest among them; the grownups dined at the old family table with an extra leaf in it, and praised the cooking and Warren's young lady impartially. After dinner the kids climbed trees and dirtied their Sunday best in the big back yard, while neighbors dropped by to have a look at the goods young Stretch had found in Philadelphia. There were Hammons, Rohrsers, Witmers, Bosticks, Eckenrodes, and a Smigelski and two O'Reillys who also said, "Ach, so?"

Some were reticent with Susan, but others offered comments that rocked her; in one afternoon she learned that a Pennsylvania Dutch family's *freindschaft* was privileged to sit and stare if they liked, or to be blunt if they were so moved. A man with a name she caught as Morningstar and which later proved to have been Morningstar told her he did not cotton to Philadelphia but that he had to admit he liked *her*, no never mind. Susan thanked him. And an old lady with dewlaps and an ear trumpet said, after inspecting her at arm's length, "The hips wider should be—you'll trouble have when the children come." Susan shouted confidentially that the first might make the going easier for the rest, maybe?

When the neighbors had gone some of the family played cards—with a geigel deck, of course, because of the holy Sabbath—while the rest sat in the viny shade of the side porch to watch the sun go down. Warren's mother, Frieda, with a very young and sleeping grandchild on her lap, looked at Susan with an eye which was tender and reminiscent.

"You passed with honors, Susan," Frieda said. "I didn't come off nearly so proudly when I was inspected in this same house thirtyseven years ago."

Her husband laughed softly. "Outlander that *she* was! Imagine, daring to mention New England boiled dinners over our seven sweets and seven sour!"

Frieda sniffed. "Foreigners like you and me, Susan, set these Dutch a-jingle."

"But, Mrs. Spangler, I'm no foreigner. I'm not even from New England!"

The grayed woman with the young face patted her hand. "We know all that, dear, and so does Noah Webster, but let it stay our secret."

Frank Spangler threw back his head to laugh. Susan beamed on him; she had liked him instantly—he was big and friendly and—oh!—comfortable. The omen was good, she thought, for she saw her Warren in his father quite a bit, thank goodness.

"'Raus, young fellow," Frank told the child on his knee. "Your mother and poppa want to take you home. . . . Don't hark to my wife, Susan. We Dutch aren't so terrible—just reserved, and jealous of it."

Good-bys and sleepy frets went up when the Spangler daughters gathered their broods and the men shook hands; their carriages rolled out of sight downstreet under the elms and oaks, and Warren listened until the last whisper of wheels had died. That sound, and the flitting strakes of sun through the leaves, was as somnolent as the summer Sunday itself, and as nostalgic as the book you might find in the attic which you'd loved as a boy. He drew a deep breath of the freshening air, and there was honeysuckle and sweet william on it. Jungle stench and Caney seemed so much farther away than a month and twelve hundred miles.

"I keep forgetting—this," he said, gesturing widely.

"You don't need to," said his father.

Warren said, "That's starting an old subject, Dad."

"What old subject?" Susan asked. Father and son were smiling

at each other, but behind the affection something crouched, she thought.

Frieda explained. "Oh, it's the dreary, familiar tale of a man who can't understand why his boy doesn't jump at the chance to share his business—a hotel, in our case. These two bullheads can't—well, like father, like you'll-discover-for-yourself."

"How do you feel about it?" Susan said.

"I'm glad you asked me—they never do! Well, it would be good to have Stretch nearer home, but on the other hand he's entitled to break the eggs for his own omelets."

"You can see why we keep her out of discussions," Frank told Susan. "She argues both ends against the middle. Her father warned me she was troublesome, but I was twenty then and knew what I knew, oh yes!"

He dodged. The glider cushion ruffled his thick hair in its flight.

"Shush!" his wife said placidly, resettling in the swing. "What kind of impression do you want to give her of our married life?"

"Or of the continental dignity of the Spanglers," Warren added. "Wazzamat, Pop? You used to duck faster than that?"

"He's still fast," Frieda said, "but I've learned to outcute him."

"She means she throws to hit me where I ain't," Frank said proudly.

They laughed at Susan's look of polite uncertainty and fell into an easy silence again while they watched the west. The sunset was trying to outdo itself along the lower bands of the spectrum; if one's taste favored indigos over pinks and oranges, it succeeded.

Warren's older brother, who had been smoking peacefully, caught a signal from his father and cleared his throat.

"Guess who I saw yesterday. Mose Hoffman," James began, and paused when he realized that no one cared much. James was not a crafty conspirator. "Eh—well—Mose said he was going to get rid of that newspaper of his up at Columbia."

"Now is that so?" Frank said. "Did you hear, Stretch?"

"Uh-huh."

"I thought I'd mention it, because—well, because," James said, and blew a smoke ring.

"Just for ducks, how much will Mose want?" Frank asked.

"He didn't say, but from his impatience I'd judge he'd be reasonable—for Mose—on prices and terms. The editor he has running the *Gazette* is a rumdum, and Mose is no newspaperman—just a farmer with a bull by the tail, he says. He thinks a fellow like Str—uh—a fellow with experience and shove could take over the paper, delinquent accounts and all, and make it hum."

"Sure sounds like a ripe opportunity for somebody," Frank said, pursing his lips.

"Dad, Jim, drop the kidding," Warren said. "You two are as subtle as nickel whisky. You've been cooking up something. What?"

Frank protested briefly, then laughed. "All right, we did. We thought, since you were talking of a little newspaper of your own someday, here was the chance."

"Gee, Dad, that's a grand idea, but——"

"We can fix everything. Hoffman will be glad to take a mortgage against a share of the hotel for security. We'll specify that Jim will have——"

"W—wait a minute! The American House is yours!"

"You and Jim will own it someday. I'll just split with you in advance," Frank said. "I've told that to Hoffman and, except for drawing up the papers, it's agreed. The final word is yours."

Warren choked. "Oh, Dad, gosh—that's—— I'm speechless! But look, Dad, I——"

"If you're not interested in the hotel itself, I don't see why we can't let the hotel help you."

"But I don't want the *Gazette*!"

Warren sounded harsh, but there was an excuse for him; he was afraid that if he should not put force into his words he might weep getting them out.

"But you always said you wanted your own paper, Stretch," his mother said. "Yes, I was in on this too."

"Listen, folks," Warren began, "nearly every reporter talks of having his own paper someday, but I've decided I'm not ready, if I'll ever be."

His stutter got lost, for he talked as if to himself. The seine of language was hard to handle when you were fishing for words to explain motives you only half understood yourself.

"I don't want a piece of property that has my name blocked on the window," he said slowly. "I want my paper, if I ever earn one, to be a living part of me."

James said, "What bunk——" but their father silenced him with a raised finger as Warren began to pace.

"I guess I sound like the great bleeding heart of Lydia Pinkham, but I don't give a damn!"

"I do," said Frank, "and I'm listening."

"Thanks, Dad." Warren rolled a leaf from the wisteria into a tight ball and studied it. "I'm not my own man yet. I don't think I've proved myself, and I do believe somehow that I'd be running from experience I need if I were to quit the Ledger so soon. For another thing, I still practice scales and finger exercises early in the mornings—I mean I haven't given up the hope of being a writer, if I can convince myself I have something to say and can say it."

"I think that's fine," his mother said, with a challenging glance at the other men. "Don't you, Susan?"

"Ralph Waldo Shakespeare," James said.

Warren did not hear James nor see Susan nod, nor did he feel her eyes on him.

"I also believe I need the rub and tangle with more and different people than there are in Columbia. A big city catches the wind of events quicker than a little town—you know how the tops of trees show a coming blow before the grass beneath. Like that."

"Blow," said James, "is right."

"Well, call it the quickening, the stir, or anything you like, but it's there. Few movements of any sort but Whisky Rebellions ever start in the country."

"You shush, Jimmy," said their mother.

"I wish I were triplets," Warren said. "One life isn't enough to cram in all I'd like to do or see. So—as long as I feel that way, how

could I accept a business given to me for love, when I don't know if it's what I want, after all?"

"That's honest enough," his father said, but frowned with disappointment.

. . . Besides, Warren thought, there were other reasons too formless and troublesome to talk about. . . . The skull-faced Cubans who seemed ready to fall through their clothes were nightmares he'd suddenly realized were familiar; you could see them any day you wanted to look, right in the city where you lived. In peace, suffering was everywhere, but nobody looked; a war merely dramatized suffering and uselessness—it was an emotional jag whose only virtue was that it taught a lot of people that there was satisfaction in banding together to get an injustice licked.

There might be something he could do, sometime, somewhere. . . . Jimmy would say to this, if Warren dared speak it aloud, "If Christ Himself couldn't wipe out inhumanities, who the hell do you think you are?"

Jimmy would be right, too, but only practically right. The certainty of defeat was not the important failure, Warren thought, but indifference and avoidance surely were. A man had to live with his own heart and answer to it. If only its call were clearer! . . .

His brother said, "What you need is a good worming."

Warren grinned. "All right, but I've got to worm myself."

"Well," said their father, "that's that."

Frieda said, "Yes, that's that, but I think you're closer to being 'your own man' than you know. Go ahead. Don't let anybody arrange things for you!"

Warren took Susan's hand. "How about it, hon?"

She looked up at him, and he felt as though he had been kissed.

"I'll never be settled about myself, either, Warren," she said. "We're a good pair. But I think you're a—you're——"

"A man," said his mother. "So do I."

"You know," Susan said dreamily, "while you were talking about Columbia, I thought of something I read in CATA-DION."

"Where?" Frank asked.

"In Chambers's Encyclopedia—my finishing school."

"Oh," said Frank.

"It's all right, Dad," Warren said. "She forgets most of it."

"I haven't forgotten that 'Columbia' is a form of the name Columbus, after Christopher C. He was looking for something too, like Warren."

Frank pounced. "And he could find it in Lancaster County as well as any place!"

"Maybe yes, maybe no," Susan said. "Some people have to knock around awhile. Columbus did and failed in the end, but he's honored for failing, because he discovered something he didn't know existed, when he was hunting an entirely different thing. As a result places he never saw are named after him."

James laughed. "I should live to be known as the brother of the Spangleria explorer!"

"Go ahead and laugh!" Susan said tartly. "Most of the fellas were like you in 1492 too! Most always are! But *they* never got Columbia, Pee-Ay, named after them!"

The last trace of sunset violet had faded by then, and she was glad, because the laughing family could not see her blush on the dark porch. But, above all, Susan was proud.

xxvii

That "good medicine," the "God-ordained," "splendid little" war with Spain struck its tent while Warren and Susan were at Lancaster in August. The New England university president, the Philadelphia rabbi, and the candidate for governor of New York who so had described our waltz with destiny must have been gratified by the results.

Despite the anxiety of the jingoes that hostilities might not last long enough to permit the grabbing of Porto Rico, they had. Men and mules got loaded aboard transports in time, the soldiers in steerage and the mules in second-class, since in steerage the mules would have died. However, the campaign featured more flower tossing than shooting, and was only slightly tarnished by the con-

duct of one famous volunteer regiment, which looted clumsily and whose commander and several of his officers resigned sooner than take an efficiency test.

An armistice halted fighting throughout all of Cuba, and, if the Cubans who had no voice in it were sullen, our late enemies were not. They gutted the place of everything movable, and one Pedro Lopez de Castillo wrote "most cordial and sincere good wishes and farewell" in the name of eleven thousand Spanish troops. He ended with a highbred admonition: "You have conquered [Cuba] by force and watered it with your blood, as your conscience called for . . . but the descendants of the Congos and the Guineas—these people are not able to exercise or enjoy their liberty, for they will find it a burden to comply with the laws that govern civilized humanity." Many of Señor Castillo's late foemen agreed about the Cubans, those "mango-bellied degenerates."

"In the words of Mr. Dooley," Warren said, "we're ready to hit the road with the White Man's Burden Tragedy Company and gather the necessary supernumeraries at the whistle stops from among the 'four hundherd millyon Topsies and six hundherd millyon Uncle Toms.' "

Gus Kelley was impressed, for if Mr. Dooley had said a thing, Gus knew it must be so. Rather meekly he showed Warren a forty-eight star flag he had bought in a fit of sidewalk chauvinism. "The street hawker was hollering, 'Get ahead of the push!'" Gus explained. "The old fortyfive star flags will be back numbers like Betsy Ross's! Them three new stars is for Cuba, the Philippines, and Spain itself."

Regiments in the Far East, whose names sounded improbable to old-timers of '61—like First Montana or 'Steenth Colorado—forced surrender on Manila and the authority of the new empire on every Filipino within rifleshoot of the city. Outside it prowled barbarians led by a goup named Aguinaldo, who had a grievance. They had been led to believe that the war had been waged to help the cause of Philippine liberty and was not a swap of foreign masters. Mr. Dooley thought the islands indeed were a problem: "We can't sell thim, we can't ate thim, and we can't throw thim into th' alley

whin no wan is lookin'. An' 'twud be a disthgrace fr t' lave before we've pounded these frindless an' ongrateful people into insin-sibility."

Smaller trophies of conquest were gathered in too. Another Wild West regiment, the Second Oregon, took Guam, and an uninspiring dot of land called Wake Island had been seized after a sharp contest with angry sea gulls.

Hawaii was annexed after years of maidenly starts and murmurs on the part of Congress. However, since we were not at war with the Yankee planters who had deposed the native ruler, we gave a formal dinner in Honolulu to consummate the deal in pineapple. This correctness was calculated to draw the teeth of critics who were calling even the war with Spain "spread-eagleism." The grumbling minority, of course, was ignorant of how finely history grinds, but Henry Cabot Lodge was not. He knew that ". . . for the unfit among nations there is no pity in the relentless world forces which shape the destinies of mankind."

Senator Lodge's bosom chum Colonel Roosevelt, who was trying to promote a Congressional Medal for himself, lashed back at the disaffected mollycoddles who were saying that the tactics at Las Guasimas had been dubious. His men "... were not ambuscaded," he insisted. "The battle was most scientific on both sides." Whatever his shortcomings were as a battle leader, the colonel stood up for his men; as he had helped them dig latrines and to commandeer Red Cross supplies over the protests of Miss Barton, he saw that they got home among the earliest. The First Volunteer Cavalry reached the bare shores of Montauk Point, Long Island, after a miserable nine days at sea, there to beg sandwiches from the carpenters who were hurriedly building a cantonment.

Warren's first major assignment at home was to go to Montauk, where he saw Horace Bigod for the last time.

"Once again," Horace said, "it looks as though the Army's affairs are being directed by a drunken Indian agent. Things here have the feel of home."

Camp Wikoff was neither ready nor supplied when the transports unloaded at its single wharf—another reminder of Fort

Tampa days. Isolated, the camp lay at the far end of what was called "the dirtiest, slowest, and most inconvenient of all railroads in the country," although the company itself advertised "frequent and efficient service to happy homes on Long Island."

Frightened by the possibility that their heroes might transmit "fever bacilli" to the loving home folks, the State of New York demanded that they be quarantined. However, the War Department crammed Wikoff not solely with prostrate suspects, but with healthy soldiers who never had left the States; and one and all remained on travel rations for weeks within a hundred and twenty miles of the nation's largest city. Yet, again like Tampa, the Long Island Rail Road ran frequent and efficient excursions to Montauk, so that lady rubberneckers could get underfoot. After a while of being adored and hungry, Horace and his successors lived high on food bought on the open market "without regard to prices" on direct orders from the President.

Spain scored its only clear-out victory of the war after the truce, when La Compañía Transatlántica Española underbid American steamship lines for the contract to return Spanish prisoners to their homeland. Considering the unfortunate happening aboard the *Harvard* off Siboney in July, this Spanish success may have been just as well. Nineteen prisoners seeking air on the *Harvard's* decks had been shot by their nervous guards, who were described by one indignant Spaniard as "semi-savage volunteers from the state of Massachusetts."

The hot time in their old town which Philadelphians sang about that summer continued into September, when hundreds keeled over from heat prostration and twenty died. The plight of Andrée, lost at the North Pole, got some minds off the weather; others believed that swimming the English Channel sounded inviting, even if the damned fool who actually was trying the deed "deserves to drown." Those who beat the heat with books cooled off with Mr. Allen's *The Choir Invisible*, Miss Atherton's *Patience Sparhawk*, and Mr. Wells's *The Invisible Man*.

With the absorption of the democrat, *genus americanus*, in the goings on among titled folk, Susan was horribly depressed by the

assassination of the Austrian empress and was uplifted by the coronation of Wilhelmina of Holland. Ma Brecht said it was high time they got a pretty young queen somewheres over there to balance off that dowdy old frump in England. Gus Kelley was intrigued by the gaudy uniforms of young Kaiser Wilhelm and got an idea for his next New Year's shooter costume.

"Herr Bismarck would have pulled a long face over the way that royal clown wastes good cloth," Gus said. "After Bismarck died last July I read that he was a skimper—paid his laborers ten cents a day, saying that more 'would only foster drunkenness and idleness among them.' Sounds just like Frick and Pullman, don't it?"

In a world abounding with Bismarcks, Warren was tickled to discover *The Will of Charles Lounsbury*, which bequeathed to children "the dandelions of the field and the daisies thereof," to boys "all the useful idle fields and commons where ball may be played," to lovers "the stars of the sky, and the red, red roses by the wall," and "to those who are no longer children or youths or lovers," the American Kenneth Grahame finished, "I leave memory."

At about the time he ran across *The Will of Charles Lounsbury*, Warren coined what he called Spangler's Law of Page Two et Seq., which went, "The insides of a newspaper contain its heart; the front page is merely a protective envelope."

On Page Two one expected to find news that the brother of Don Valeriano Weyler, the Butcher of Cuba, had turned up as a quartermaster sergeant—and a good one—in an Ohio regiment and that a minister in Fort Worth had preached a scheduled sermon first before going home to poison his wife. Captain Dreyfuss was going to have his case reviewed, and that was headline news, but on Page Two another Jew was saying to the Second Zionist Congress that he believed that the state of Israel could be re-established in Palestine. Theodore Herzl's project "abounded in romantic interest" even for the Russian Jews who attended the Congress, although they took no part in its debates out of fear that too much zeal for Zionism might be interpreted as treason back home.

Page Two provided moral bonbons too. Here one read that the

Presbytery of Philadelphia was convinced that the use of tobacco was "not a sin, but inconsistent with the Christian profession." Heaven heard the Presbyterians and sent a hailstorm which ruined the Lancaster County tobacco crop, some of the stones being big enough to kill rabbits. The W.C.T.U. declared somewhat mud-dily that, "The future generation of drunkards depends on the mothers," and pressed on to prohibit beer in Old Soldiers' Homes and wine for Holy Communion. Casual derision of Catholics no longer was tolerated by large newspapers, but many bigots still insisted that there should be no place in the armed forces for Roman chaplains.

A few people of immaculate probity even were saying that holding a union card did not deprive a working man of his citizenship and humanity, but they were quoted on Page Two *et Seq.* To most merchants who invoked deity on bills of lading and the Union League on election day, this turncoat equalitarianism forecast the death of the republic of Washington, Lincoln, Vanderbilt, and Pinkerton, and their decencies were carried on the front page.

The latest word from the campuses of the nation was slugged into Page Two *et Seq.*, also, and fascinated Warren to the extent of a mild headache. Harvard said, "The abnormal interest shown in [football players] was leading them to believe their doings are of real importance to the civilized world." Yale got a tap from the great evangelist Moody, who said, "If my other son . . . gets as much good out of Yale as his brother did, I shall have reason to thank God throughout time and eternity." A man at Lafayette tried to burn down a college hall after having cut the ivy on several others to spite the faculty. He was Lafayette's assistant professor of ethics.

Farther back of Page Two in the *et Seq.* sections the cartoonists gamboled. The Yellow Kid said, "Keep de change," and this was funny. Rastus and Mammy drawings showed lovable darkies stealing chickens, running from graveyards, picking watermelon seeds from their ears, and wearing the most uproariously comical rags for clothing that a person ever did see. There were change offs, of course, to the other ridiculous people of the world: Englishmen

in monocles who said, "Bally!," Eye-talians leading monkeys and tipping da hat, Chermans mit tubas vot vent "oompah," and foine Irishmen smoking dudeens and bruising one another most amusingly. Editorially, other humorists had fun with a certain war hero's name, which sounded like Rosenfelt, but none of these clever people stung the gallant colonel like Mr. Dooley, who suggested that his memoirs of the war be titled, "Alone in Cubia."

Warren himself contributed a Page Two account of the restoration of Independence Hall; twelve people worked three years on research alone, he learned, and the reconstruction was finished by late October in time to impress the thousands of visitors who attended Philadelphia's Peace Jubilee. Warren took his fiancée to all three days of the Jubilee events, and even got her an advance peek into the Bellevue Hotel apartment where the President's wife would stay.

"Oh, Warren, did I ever think I'd see her rooms with my own eyes! Why, they're a perfect study in pink and ivory—and do look at the orchids and American Beauties and that green stuff!"

"The green stuff is asparagus, they tell me."

"You're kidding!"

"Nope, I asked. . . . Anyhow, hon, aren't you glad you're marrying an influential guy who knows house detectives?"

The monster naval parade on the Delaware almost overwhelmed Susan, who flinched at the salutes to the Secretary of the Navy and wished noisemaking had been confined to the locomotive whistles, church bells, and general huzzaing. Besides, there just was too much of everything to see. Big boats spread out for miles, you know, with little fellows like the one she was on skittering around and ramming into posts and things. . . . Upriver, the new cruiser *Kasagi* lay at Cramp's Shipyards with every flag in its locker flying in lieu of having guns to answer salutes. Susan begged Warren to run the *Ledger* launch close so that she might see a Japanese, and was delighted when a little man in a huge fore-and-aft plumed hat bowed to her from the cruiser's bridge.

"Commander Gin Seyeki, I guess he was," Warren said, "Captain Kashiwafara's deputy. They just arrived to take over."

"He was cute," Susan said. "Isn't it a shame such nice little people choose such sneezy names?"

Because the next day was stormy, the military celebration was postponed until Thursday. Warren got his lady a chair by a mezzanine window of the Stratford Hotel before he shoved into the jammed street. Sidewalk-grandstand speculators were asking two dollars a seat, but Susan from her window could see most of the Court of Honor with its plaster arch and columns through which the triumphal parade would pass. By leaning out she could have seen the electric sign on City Hall which proclaimed, "The ☆ Spangled Banner In Triumph Doth Wave," but she was so excited that she was afraid of tumbling into Broad Street.

Then she heard the advance of martial music and saw the first wave of policemen in gray dress derbies clearing the street for General Miles and the Twentyfirst Infantry band at the head of the marchers. For a moment Susan thought she would faint with national pride—was there ever a handsomer general, or a nobler sight than the legged men following him? The cheering masses on the sidewalks thought there never had been either, and threw cigars and fried oysters to them. Proud small boys strutted by carrying signs before the sections of the parade which identified regiments from twenty states, including the "First Delaware." Some marines went by with a goat and the crowds shouted, "Guan-tanamol!" which was not the goat's name, but should not have enraged him so. The jingling cavalry was so romantic, Susan thought, and the rumble of the artillery on the asphalt sounded stern and protective.

Pushing through the crowd, Warren had his pocket picked, but did not know it until much later, when he was able to say that the thief had stolen trash. He was wondering why General Shafter was not in line, and why the oldest, most tottery Civil War vet always seemed to carry the largest, most unmanageable flag in these affairs. He got the name of that old stager as well as of another in the G.A.R. contingent who was swinging along between crutches—what, all the way up from Snyder Avenue? And he expected to make it the rest of the way to York Street? . . .

From the reviewing stand in the Court of Honor, President McKinley bowed to the tough old cripple. The President looked pale and sick, Warren thought, but he did laugh when a tall bandsman of the 201st New York—"Crackshot" Herman, the *Ledger* man found he was—amused everyone by his virtuosity as a Scotch drummer. Hobson and his *Merrimac* crew went by in a carriage, and the crowd reached its zenith of enthusiasm; to Warren it seemed that the deluge of shot Hobson had faced in Santiago harbor could have been no more dangerous than the chocolates and box lunches which were hurled at him by his wild admirers. . . .

Tireless in its "blaze of Patriotic Glory," the city turned out again along the same line of march Friday. The civic parade, to Warren's mind, was more colorful than the Navy's or the Army's show. Plain citizens could run the gamut in festive costume and behavior, and yet even in masquerade they often were quite themselves. Titania, Queen of the Fairies, went by eating a pretzel, for instance, and Vulcan was stripping a banana. The float representing The Birth of Old Glory lacked Betsy Ross, who had fallen off, but a file of Continentals led by a slightly skunked Anthony Wayne got cheers. "The onlookers must have been out-of-towners," Warren wrote that night, "because everybody in Philadelphia was parading."

School children, the art institutes, the Knights of the Golden Eagle, the P.O.S. of A., the Mannerchor, postmen, customs collectors, firemen, all paraded. Even the Chinese from drab Race Street went by dressed in sailors' whites, while the mandarins in line probably were employees of the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Street Cleaning. Which was more fun, Warren thought, to show off in a parade or to watch one? . . . The biggest hit of the day was the string of Commercial Museum floats which depicted America's new possessions—four authentic Hawaiians on one float really got the crowd and made a number of home-bred Kiplings sit down that night to write imperial verse for the newspaper.

All in all, it was a hectic week to precede his wedding, Warren thought as he finished his story that night at the *Ledger*. Susie

had taken the trolley home in a state of emotional exhaustion she described as "gone-ness," and he himself felt a bit like wet bunting. He threw down his pencil, clasped his hands behind his head, and stared at the green-shaded bulb overhead. . . .

Just to think: Monday there'd be a Mrs. Spangler who wouldn't be Mother. Everybody was about set for the balloon to go up, too. They had decided to hold the service at Warren's home for many reasons, including Susan's rather frightening offhand remark that "he owed his family the spectacle." Ma Brecht and Gus looked forward to the jaunt to Lancaster, although it had taken a bit of argument to convince Ma that Lancaster was only three hours' travel time away—she had been afraid she'd have to remain fully dressed in her berth overnight, "in case of an accident." Gus was pleased he'd been asked to give away the bride, which surprised Susan, since she had blindly assumed he would be backward when asked. Uncle Charley, Warren's one-legged uncle who had been quite a heller in his own youth, was coming deadhead all the way from San Francisco, and had written a stilted letter of congratulation to Warren in which he had made a lumbering joke about being surprised that a little fellow in knee pants was taking a wife—his wife, and passing time, and long service with the U.P. Railroad had slowed Uncle Charley down a lot.

Mother had sent a couple of friendly letters to Susan, which Warren realized were important to the girl. Susan had allowed him to read one of them, a chatty bit of this-and-that which ranged from talk of a scalp wound from a hatpin to a recipe for making rutabagas edible, but his sweetheart had been secretive about the other. It made Warren feel tense and betrayed.

Dad knew better than to write the heartily false sort of letter which Warren now realized that prospective bridegrooms always receive. In his only letter since they'd been to Lancaster, Frank had apologized for not really liking the *Public Ledger* his son was sending. "A man gets used to his local *blatter*, and its misprints and nuisances generally are more acceptable to him than the best features of a strange sheet. That isn't good sense, but it's human—however, I see I've repeated myself. . . ."

Very soon, Warren ruminated, the *Ledger* would not be simply a fine way in which to indulge his curiosity about people, but would be a livelihood, a breadbox on which a wife would depend. And, in God's time, would be a teat for his children. . . . The City Room was cool, but he had to wipe a sudden perspiration off his forehead. The boys' ribald good wishes, "Allah send thee power," "May all your troubles . . ." and so forth were humorous, he supposed, but the thought of the changes fatherhood would bring suddenly seemed graver than becoming a Buddhist monk. Warren Spangler, he, a creator of lives! Well, naturally the doing wouldn't be all his, nor even the toughest part, but it seemed incredible on this Friday night, the twentyeighth of October, 1898, that in a few years somebody or -bodies would be calling him "Dada." Scared hell out of him, too. . . .

His friend Tweed, the sketch artist, came over to Warren's desk, but the mooner did not hear him. Standing in the gloom outside the circle of the hanging bulb's light, Tweed had to repeat a question.

"Come to, bub! You trying to think of a rhyme for orange or something?"

"No, I'm . . . Oh, hello, Tweedy."

"How about a cup of coffee and a snack?"

"Sure. Good idea. I've finished."

Outside, the night air was tingly; it suggested the imminence of nights for woolen blankets. Venus was bright in the south, but northward over Frankford, where Susan probably was asleep, the sky was dark. Too dark, it seemed to Warren.

"What's biting you?" Tweed said. "I've asked you twice how you reckon the election will come off, and twice you've said, 'Probably.'"

"I did?"

Tweed gave him a long look, but instead of speaking he twisted his long mustaches and smiled. They went on in step until outside Horn and Hardart's the artist said abruptly:

"Nervous, matey?"

"Who, me?" Warren shook himself. "What about, what about?"

"That'll pass for a confession," Tweed said. "You're wondering how you happened to come to the edge, and whether you ought to take the big jump, huh?"

"Don't be daffy!"

"It'll get worse, so cheer up, Stretch. Me, I had the worst attack of the feebles just before the organist let fly with Mendelssohn, and if Bill Abbot hadn't been right there with me in that little room off the altar rail, I'd have flown the coop. . . . No, of course I wouldn't have, but it was good to have Bill there with a small bottle of stuff he'd brought along in case there were snakes in the chapel. . . . Sure, most men get panicked somewhere between the time they ask the lady to say yes and the day when it all becomes official with 'I will.' It's a feeling as if what's going to happen is no part of their doing or choosing."

Warren stared. How had Tweedy guessed? A man did feel—well, sort of trapped.

The artist laughed at the look and put his hand on Warren's arm.

"Stretch, have you ever considered the purgative value of a bender?"

"Why, no, not exactly. You see, I couldn't drink when I was on the crew, and——"

"Yes, yes. I understand. You fell into the habit of thoughtless abstinence. But what I'm trying to insinuate is that when the course of human events gets cheesy one's soul may need a physic. For me, anyway, a workmanlike souse does the trick."

"Bushwa," Warren said, but hesitated.

Tweed shook his head. "All right, but sometimes no matter how fragile I feel when I look at the ceiling the morning after a sober bit of drinking, I discover that the poison cured me."

After a pause Warren said, "I'll buy the first one," and they turned around and went to McGovern's. . . .

Warren groaned awake the next day. Tweedy, he felt, was a damned liar and a mere promoter of free drinks for himself. The only thing a morning-after did for Warren was to make death it-

self seem desirable, let alone marriage unto death. How on earth could little splashes of rye in those sarsaparillas manage to make his skull feel like a lead mine? . . . Well, tomorrow was The Day, anyhow. Hooray. Now if there was just some way right this minute of steering the bed into a smoother anchorage . . .

xxviii

Rowena reached behind one shoulder for a handful of heavy hair and leaned down into the work of brushing it.

"Oh, I don't know," she said. "The music we heard tonight was nice, but I wouldn't say it was better. The New York band was bigger."

"God," said her husband, "what a method of comparison!"

"You're just miffed because it's so."

"All right, then," Caleb said, "by the same reasoning I could say that the Symphonic Society's conductor is better than the New York one because he could lick him—our man's got about a twenty-pound weight advantage. And by the way, I don't mean to be tiresome, but when will you get around to calling a symphony orchestra by its proper name? . . . *Band!*"

He turned away from the hotel window and went into the bathroom. It was a curious feeling, he thought, to look down into Market Street from a Bingham House window, knowing that on the hotel book you were registered as a guest from Tampa, Florida. Tomorrow the illusion of being alien would disappear when he and Rowena went to stay with his parents for the rest of their honeymoon; but now, for a night, his native city seemed strange because he no longer was of it. Not even his marriage had made him feel quite so aware that a curtain had dropped between him and the year almost gone.

"I couldn't see well enough from our box to make a sure count of the orchestra," Rowena said, "but I'm sure it was littler. I'll have to get me a pair of those cunning little opera glasses on a stick when we come North next season."

He said "Urrgh" through a foam of Camphorated Saponaceous Dentifrice. On top of the drinks he'd had after the concert the toothpaste tasted even more hellish than usual; Rowena, though, implored him to use it regularly, for it kept her teeth "pearly," she said. . . . Well, you had to humor a woman when you lived with her. Toothpaste was a small thing to concede to save argument. . . .

"Twentytwo, twentythree, twentyfour," she counted. Her buttercream hair crackled and clung to the brush. "Anyhow, I would be careful how I talked if I were you. You've said the only reason you ever went to the Academy of Music or the opera was because it was a ritual expected of the better class of people. Now, me, I love classical pieces and I don't care. . . . I do wish they'd played 'The Rosary' for one of their encores—it's the loveliest thing."

Caleb dried his face. On the rack also were several of Rowena's own linen towels; she said that even though they were staying in town just for the night there was no sense risking her sensitive skin with chancy hotel cottons.

"Did you hear me, Caleb?"

"Sure. Something about 'The Rosary.'"

"No, that was before. You don't listen to me, lover-boy. I said, how long had you known Mrs. Spangler?"

"Susan? Oh, briefly."

"Did you ever tell me about her? Was she the one who——"

"No. Whoever you're thinking of—no."

"She's a pretty little thing. Only, that silk ribbon in her hair. So girlish—my!"

"She looked all right to me."

"You're a man, dear boy. Men think anything young is beautiful. It isn't, though; a mature woman, for instance, has . . ."

Caleb sat on the edge of the bed in his nightshirt and began to shred dead skin from a callus, a stubborn memento of the walking Rough Riders. Rowena turned from the mirror and said:

"Do you crave blood poisoning? Besides, that's a disgusting habit. . . . Anyhow, that red taffeta she was wearing was a scream, wasn't it?"

"If you have no preference which question I should answer, I'll say that I thought her dress suited her coloring and wasn't anywhere near so loud as those ties you bought for me in New York. Two of them carelessly rubbed together could start a fire. I think Susan was got up in good taste. Deponent sayeth no further."

"Are you trying to dig me?"

"Hell, no," he said, balancing the stress between his words.

His wife leaned toward him reproachfully. "Why do you bully-rag me about ornamentation, anyhow, Caleb? That gold passementerie for the gown you picked out, for instance—I only ordered a little bitty piece for the neckline, but, gracious, you took on so sarcastically that I didn't wear any jewelry even, except one tiny dingle-dangle at the throat!"

Her dressing jacket gaped, exposing the breasts which had looked proud in the square-cut, low, black velvet gown he had personally selected. Caleb stared at the bosom a moment and then yawned.

"Never mind, Rowena. If you don't understand, you don't understand."

He swung his legs into bed with a grunt; the stiffness lingering from his wound sometimes hurt him late at night or on rising. Rowena resumed her yard-long brushing.

"Forty, fortyone—all the fashionable women in the parquet and boxes had opera glasses, so——"

"We'll get you a pair in mother-of-pearl, dear, so shut up."

He chuckled suddenly, and his wife glanced at him. She mistrusted abrupt signs of amusement.

"I just thought of poor old Stretch," Caleb explained.

"Oh?"

"I'll bet Susan will lead him a chase. She's a starchy one."

"Tell me about her. Was she one of your women too?"

"Damn it, Rowena, forget my women!"

"Oh, lover-man, you know I'm just interested."

"Anyhow, that wasn't the real reason I said 'poor old Stretch.' I was sympathizing over the crummy job he has, and the way he—I don't know. He strikes me as vague and restless."

"You needn't have proposed having a rarebit together just because we ran into them in the foyer. Weren't there other more gracious people there that you knew?"

"Oh, you know how it goes—old school friend—well, well, hello, old man—all that. Besides, he was damned considerate about me when I was on my back down in Cuba, and, most of all, I owe meeting you to him."

"Sweet!"

"Uh-huh. How well had you known him, by the way?"

"So-so."

"That's no answer!"

She smiled at him by way of the mirror. "Why, lover, I do suspect you're jealous of big old Warren and little old me."

"No, I——"

"If you mean, did I ever invite him up a ladder to say good-by before he left for Cuba, the answer is no."

"He had a room to use, too."

"We didn't spark there, either," she said, which was true, but she gave her voice a slight suggestion of you're-getting-warmer, which annoyed her husband. Baffled as she intended, he dropped the subject and yawned again to show his indifference.

"Sixtysix, sixtyseven, sixtyeight," she murmured, still smiling. "Warren's a talented young man, though, don't you think?"

"I don't know nor care. You told him so tonight in just those words, I remember. Why do you have to remind people you're older than they are?"

"Fudge!" said Rowena. "Do I? It must be a bad old habit I got from Howard Joe. Dear old Howard Joe, he——"

"He resurrects too often to suit me, too."

"Well, after all, I was his wife a long time, and living with a man is habit-forming, you might say, and——"

"Oh, drop it! It seems to me you'd try to forget you've got eight or nine years on me."

"Eight," said Rowena. "You know, when you're pouty you make it hard for me to forget my motherly instincts, dear boy."

"And cut out the 'dear boy' mush, will you?"

"Sixtysix, sixtysev—now see! You made me lose count."

"Speaking of mothers," Caleb said, "we'd better take rooms at the Tampa Bay until our house is built and ready. Your mother's clack gives me the fantods."

"She does talk a lot, but it oughtn't to bother you," Rowena said placidly. "Don't listen. I don't."

"Jabber, jabber, jabber, from dawn to dark."

"Just don't give your ears the bother."

"How can your father stand it? How any man could is beyond me."

"Howard Joe used to say—— Oh, I forgot. I mustn't talk about him. Anyhow, the whole subject isn't worth the effort. Eightyfour, eightyfive . . ."

Caleb noticed that there was a pattern of interlocked loops running around the rim of the ceiling, and it suggested a chain, an endless chain.

His family liked Rowena, or seemed to. It was hard to tell about them when they had their manners on, which was nearly always, but his mother had cried and smiled all at once, and his father had opened a bottle of his solemn-joy Madeira, so the meeting went off all right. If they were withholding approval in the backs of their minds, it would make no difference; they'd only have to be visited once a year by Rowena, and both sides could make shift to stand that.

Of course when life grew tedious in Florida he'd come North alone, oftener than annually, as often as needed to take a holiday from marriage. If outsiders got curious, the reason was business, or family necessity; Rowena and he had agreed to that, for theirs was going to be an alliance of two honest people. They had reached their understanding shortly after he had asked her to marry him—just how he had felt the impulse to propose was unclear, but once the question was out he had hastened to mourn his probable inability to be a truly good husband, if she knew what he meant.

Rowena had known what he meant. "Sweet boy, I've thought of that. I'm not a possessive kitty, not that way, and I think you'll be nicer to me if you're not close-bound. You can just go ahead

and—refresh yourself when you please. Only be discreet—which I am sure you will be.”

She already had shown she did mean what she had said, and it irritated him more than he cared to admit. She appeared to enjoy his tales of bachelor rounding, which were meant to tease but which backfired. She prodded him into details, by God, that you ordinarily would not mention even at a stag smoker, and then laughed—*laughed!* One night last week while they’d been lying awake at the Cataract House above the falls at Niagara she’d really succeeded in shocking him. “How I wish I could be you for just a few weeks, to see how it all feels,” she’d said—now wasn’t that something to take the ragtime out of manhood!

Her broad-mindedness was a trap, more than likely. “All I’ll ever require of you,” she’d said, “is to be sure you remember I’m Mrs. Caleb Hawkins.” Behind the words was a dagger; “remember” had undertones of “if not . . .” and suggested that she would make him regret any attempt to discard her. Well, that possibility was remote, really. A marriage with silken bonds, and the life in Florida, would demand as little hardship as he could want. Outdoor living, hunting, fishing, perhaps a few drinking fellowships, and no need to plow a straight furrow. Everybody polite, and nobody thoughtful. Beautiful wife, beautiful life—what more could a man want to make him settle down?

If only there weren’t a sneaking feeling of being on a leash somehow. The “dear boy” mush, and those flexible smiles which gave away nothing of what was going on behind the green eyes. She made him feel like—like a convenience, damn it! The empress’s tame gladiator, and all that that implied. . . .

“Why don’t you quit currying and turn out the lights?” he said.

“Now you know I always brush my hair good at night, Caleb, so you may as well get used to it. Being so long, it takes longer to stroke. A hundred and twentyeight, a hundred and twenty-nine, a hundr—”

“Well, God damn it, don’t count out loud!”

She sighed. “Oh dear, you want to be quarrelsome. I guess the

honeymoon is over even before it's over." Then she smiled one of her green smiles. "But maybe it's because you're tired, poor boy. It has been a full day—and two such full, glorious months!"

"Yes. Now hurry with the lights. I *am* tired."

"I'll be with you in a jiffy, lover-man."

When she had braided, and washed, and darkened the room. however, she found that lover-man was snoring.

After a bit of trouble in the dark with the cranky lock and his wife's coaching, Warren got open the door to their house. He stood aside and said:

"Le Château Spangler sur Franklin Square, madam."

Susan said, "Hello, house," and hurried in.

When she had taken off her coat she held her bare arms across her taffetaed breast and shivered.

"Brrr! December's gone cold and so has this house."

"Go to bed," Warren said. "I'll be along pronto."

"You just want me to take the chill off the sheets for you."

"Beat it!"

In the kitchen he mixed a dose of bicarbonate for himself and some condensed milk with warm water from the back of the coal range for the cat, who had complained of shabby treatment when let in. Then Warren banked the furnace fire, dropped a precautionary quarter into the gas meter, tore a leaf off the kitchen calendar, shoved kitty downstairs, and climbed Wooden Mountain himself. Susan was a dune on one side of their bed, with the blanket drawn to her chin, when he came into their room.

"I was so chilly I was careless," she said, "but did you look to see if Tomás was hanging around?"

"He was. I gave him some milk, and he deigned to drink it."

Warren undressed rapidly, washed, and raced for the covers. For a moment or two Susan had a spell of quaking and giggling over the cold air he had let into the bed, and then they lay still and watched the pattern on the ceiling thrown by the gaslight in the alley. It was the kind of pause at day's end which a wife loves, and which she usually breaks.

"I wonder," Susan said, "why our friend Caleb married a woman so much older than he is?"

"Huh? Who?" her husband said drowsily.

"Caleb. Marrying a faded old beauty, I said."

"She's not rusty yet, hon. Maybe she's thirty."

"She'll never see thirty again, I promise you."

"Neither will you when you're thirtyone, kid, but what the hell."

"Well, something I'll never do will be to swish around as if being a little older and sixty cents richer than the next person gives me the right to treat her like a—an amusing bug!"

"She got on your nerves, huh?"

"A bug on its back!"

Susan mimicked Rowena, but not well, because she disliked her too much. "Way-ul, Ah declayuh yo look too cunnen fo wohds, Miz Spanglah. Yo ribbon adds jest a touch—I could have touched her with a mop handle when she fingered it!"

"She wanted to be friendly, I guess."

"Hah!"

"All right, she wanted to see if it was silk, then. I wouldn't let Rowena upset me, hon, when you won't see her again."

"Oh, I suppose. . . . I must say she was positively ravishing in that black gown, though. So simple and rich it was, and with her height and bare shoulders and all, darn it, I felt insignificant!"

"If it will cheer you up, I can tell you that men were turning to look at you too. I kept score."

"My goodness, don't try to tell me! It was her in that dress. And the way it was cut, down to——"

"Yes, you could see down Happy Valley to the Twin Peaks on a clear day, couldn't you?"

"Speak for yourself. You were trying hard enough to."

"Well, it kept me occupied and out of mischief. The conversation curled up its toes and died when you two ladies wouldn't let us men talk about the nasty old war. What in the world did you find so engrossing in chitchat about Tampa people you didn't know, and about how drunk they get, and how much money they have?"

"Because, smarty, I don't sit and stare around the room just because I'm fidgety. Anyhow, even if I was gracious and listened to her, she knew I didn't like her."

"In the interests of social honesty, I'm glad to know women can tell."

"And I was fascinated hearing about their trip. Oh dear, Warren, I guess there's no use moaning, but I do wish we could have taken our honeymoon right after we got married."

"So do I, sweetheart, but I couldn't ask for a leave so soon after the post-Cuba holiday. We'll be sure to go honeymooning during my vacation next summer."

"Niagara Falls?"

"If it's still running. Just think how aristocratic it'll be to look at that big splash when we're old married people instead of common newlyweds!"

"For all you know, I may be wearing my bustle backwards next summer, or even sooner maybe."

"Hooray! He or she or them could go along, family-excursion style."

"Just imagine me all swelled out on my honeymoon! Think of the talk! And what pleasure could I, or an unborn baby, get out of the scenery?"

"Well, he might hear the falls."

"Warren Spangler!"

But she giggled, and he kissed her. However, when he rolled over on his sleeping side, thinking the bed talk was done, he found himself mistaken.

"How well did you know her, Warren?"

"Who, Rowena? Oh, I took her to dances down there. It's customary to take women to dances—unless you're a woman, that is."

"Uh-huh. I mean, *really* know her?"

"Not that well."

"Are you sure?"

"Practically. Why?"

"Oh, she behaved as if she owned you, too, and had just rented

you out for the evening. Tapping you with her fan and all that. I could have spit."

"I think Rowena likes to hold court whenever chance offers, Susie."

"I'd hate to think we were beginning our marriage by keeping secrets from each other."

"Do you really want to know?"

"Certainly. . . . No, no, don't tell me!"

He chuckled and hugged her. "Well, I was in love with Rowena, but unfortunately I'd already married Queen Victoria in Milwaukee. Secretly. So, you see——"

"Warren Spangler, don't joke about a thing like that—ever!"

"My sweet, my pepper, my Susie. You love to torment yourself with foolish questions, don't you? Now suppose I were to pin you down about the stable of lovers you kept, now just supposing?"

"You'd get a damnation hard smack! Besides, you're a gentleman, I guess."

Both of them laughed aloud. In another period of intimate silence they heard a trolley hurry across the double crosstracks at Arch Street, *bunk-bunk, bunka-bunk-bunk*, and waited until it droned by underneath their window. Both of them felt glad they were not on the trolley going somewhere in the night.

Warren said, "Happy?"

"Uh-huh. Are you?"

"It's my hobby. . . . I wonder if Caleb ever will be?"

"I'm so happy I hope so, and even for that hoity-toity blonde, too."

"Maybe they will be, for a time, anyhow. From what I know of Caleb, he's always been gay until the different becomes the usual. The different doesn't have to be good, but just different; and the usual doesn't have to be bad, just usual."

"You better write that down. You can use it sometime in a story."

"I am wonderful, ain't I?"

"Ohmyes! And pretty too."

"Think I'll ever beat you, Mrs. S?"

"Think I'll let you, Mr. S?"

"Think we'll ever get any sleep tonight?"

However, the play turned to something more than words then. Susan started that, too.

Afterward she went to sleep with one arm across her husband's chest. It reminded him of how Stephen Crane had spoken of the security of love:

*Should the wide world roll away,
Leaving black terror,
Limitless night,
Nor God, nor man, nor place to stand
Would be to me essential,
If thou and thy white arms were there,
And the fall to doom a long way.*

Warren thought that white arms were much of love, but as he went to sleep he thought of simpler happinesses too. The warm blanket, for instance, and the gladness you weren't on a streetcar thundering away into the distance, and knowing that home was a place to come home to. Always providing that on the first of the month, when the rent came 'round, you could pay. But, above all, knowing that for richer or for poorer there was someone to share.

xxix

Because they had spent Christmas with his family in Lancaster, Warren and Susan arranged to spend the New Year's holiday with hers, so on Saturday the thirtyfirst they took the cars to Frankford to have supper with Ma Brecht and Gus.

Ma was sentimentally scandalized to hear that the newlyweds would not spend the first hours of the beginning year together; Warren was going to report how the downtown part of the city should welcome 1899.

"And I'll catch some sleep in what's left of the night at home," he said. "No use disturbing you here in the dawn."

"Well, anyhow," Gus said, "you won't miss me after supper in me pristine glory—Kelley, the pride of the Golden Slipper Club. By the time you see me again I won't be able to guarantee ontire satisfaction."

"I should smile," Ma said, unsmiling. "He's going to make a day of tonight."

"Maybe two," said Gus. "Most of the boys has Hangover Monday off."

Warren was reading a dispatch with a Havana date line when Gus came downstairs in costume. The report said, "Every Cuban is expected to explode with enthusiasm at twelve noon, Sunday, January 1, 1899, for at ihat hour the American flag will be unfurled over the old Morro Castle." Farther along Warren read that the Anti-Imperialist League felt that the day should be one of mourning, and was both amused and embarrassed by the lines, "It is becoming common to see intoxicated American soldiers on the streets of Havana. . . . There is a big demand for an American drug-store."

When Gus entered in his mummer's getup, Warren burst out laughing. The burly old boy suggested nothing quite so well as an embodiment of the "Pomp and Circumstance" march played on a kazoo.

"*Hoch der Kaiser!*" Gus demanded through his false spiked mustache, and tugged at a sword which looked an inch or two short of nine feet.

Ma Brecht screeched, "Gus Kelley, mind the breakables! You and that thing!"

"It ought to come in handy to clean out a *bierstube*," the Kaiser said, spitting on the blade.

"Gus, you could be hung up by the thumbs for lese majesty, or whatever such disrespect calls for in Germany," Warren said. "You're a corker!"

"This ain't Germany, thank God," Gus said, trying to find his scabbard with the point of the blade and having as much difficulty as the average Knight of Columbus might. "What do you think me mother's old man dusted out of Germany for if it wasn't dis-



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respect for what this here represents? But ain't I the pippin? Wilhelm Hohenzollern Kelley, Esquire—if I don't take the comic prizes, I'll suspect the worst of the judges, I tell you!"

Susan said, "For goodnessake, where did you find those trap-pings?"

"From friends and others, but it took doing in spots. The red britches I won playing pinochle, from a guy that was a Zouave in the war—the big one in 'sixtyone. The monkey jacket with the shoulder dusters was left of a lodge uniform that belonged to Bill Parsons. I—uh—honeyfuggled it off his widow."

"Yes, yes?" Warren said, but Margaret's sniff put a stopper to details of winning the braided green coat.

"Well, the jack boots I built up meself from a pair of brogans I glued patent leather onto. Tom Dungan loaned me this old Light-house Fire Brigade helmet which I titivated up some."

"Lily-gilding if ever I saw lily-gilding," Warren said.

"But the sword's the daisy! Ian MacIver says it's a heirloom—calls it a claymore. The way the durn thing dangles on me couldn't be sillier nor better!"

"You'll break your neck," Ma said.

"Get a flash of me medals! I must of gone to thirty pawnshops for them. This'n, now, third from the left, fourth row up—it says, 'In Recognition of a Kind Heart: Our Dumb Friends' League.' Ain't that a darb?"

"I declare," Margaret said, "I don't understand this New Year shooting. Grown men like him"—pointing brittlely at her boarder—"sewing on them tomfool rigs for months, just to go out and fall down drunk in! Lordy, the prizes they fight over is only gew-gaws from neighborhood shops around Frankford, and come Monday he won't know if it was a Reading train hit him or the Archangel Mike. Judging from the weather outside, I'll be in the wholesale mustard-plaster business for a week, too."

"I glory in me shame," said Gus.

"Even you will wonder what was the use. Well, what is?"

Warren said, "If you have a choice between laughing or crying a new year in, Ma, what would you choose?"

"Attaboy!" Gus said.

"It's better Gus's way, Ma," Susan said slowly. "Dogs and cats can't make fools of themselves over a new year, because they don't know one from another. But men do—not just because we've got calendars, either, but—oh, I don't know—maybe because we've got hopeful souls."

She blushed because everyone looked at her.

"Well, my!" said her mother.

Warren smiled. Gus said:

"Whatever it is, a feller gets such a charge of it that he has to act the jackass to keep from busting."

"Hear, hear," Warren murmured.

"I guess there's always hope that 1899 will be better," Gus said. "And come 1900—sounds funny, don't it?—there's hope *that'll* fill the flush. And if the 1900s won't, maybe the coming whatchamacallem will. The year 2000, I mean."

"Millennium?" Warren said.

"Yes. I wish I was educated. Sure, Susie, if millions didn't have hope to go on, no New Year's would mean any more than they do to the cats and bowwows. Without better to look forward to, there wouldn't be any sense to living and obeying laws and raising kids."

Susan glanced at her husband, then looked away. He wondered what she meant, but forgot to ask later. In another month or so, she thought, she would be certain enough of a suspicion to tell him. . . .

The memory of her passionate face when she had said, "not just because we've got calendars," warmed Warren's heart through the night as he tramped about the downtown streets keeping watch for 1899. . . . We don't know what the onrushing years will bring, Susie, but we can hope, can't we?

Life as Dad had known it when he was young, and what his father had known, had been so much simpler than now. Oh, not easier exactly, but a lot more predictable. Nothing moved so fast then, and a man could be reasonably sure that any coming year would be much the same as those which had passed; by looking at your father, and at his shop, and listening to his opinions, you

could pretty well guess what you yourself would look and sound like in twenty or thirty years. Nowadays even an empire four hundred years old could collapse within four months! And great cataclysms had their counterparts in tiny strains and smashes all about you, the rights or wrongs of which were a babble of tongues, for all any one man could know.

If there was one firm certainty in the world, Warren thought, it was that no man could isolate himself from the effects of the vast contentions, just as it was sure that every man contributed to them. "No man is an Iland, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine." It was an awful thought, but how could John Donne, who had lived back in so much simpler days, have known how truly he wrote? . . .

In the City Room hours later he read what he had written of the night's doings. On the wall a Seth Thomas ticktocked like a death-watch, its pendulum winking solemnly through a sunburst hole in its case. The wee hours were getting to be big boys now, Seth said.

. . . Neighborhood New Year's "shooting" in Philadelphia is a dying custom [Warren read], at least so far as invasions of the central city are concerned. There were more highjinks on the floor of the Bourse this afternoon than on the downtown streets tonight. The Bourse traders cast dignity to the winds and engaged in a jolly fight with grain bags and inflated bladders, but in front of Independence Hall by a quarter to midnight not a single pistol shot had been fired. Police reserves stood about the renovated State House shuffling their feet in the raw cold and looking as if they might have welcomed a little blood-stirring misbehavior. However, the lockup boxes on the street corners held no miscreants awaiting the station wagon except for a few ordinary-Saturday-night tosspots. Aside from the fires under the pans of some hardy roast-chestnut peddlers, the warmth of the Happy New Year must have been confined to the homes of the City of Homes.

Along Market and Broad streets a number of the curious had congregated to see the great new clock in City Hall tower lighted for the first time. Even among these, mufflers were more popular than clackers, for the weather assisted the cause of civic decorum. A stinging sleet coated the piles of snow from the nine-inch fall of

three days ago, and the watchers waited in doorways. Cabbies reined their horses as though they would hold them up on the slippery footing by tense hands on the lines. One lone tin horn blatted in the wet air from a streetcar window. Huddled in a doorway near where this reporter stood was a Salvation Army band; it was hard to believe that here on South Broad Street had stood the Court of Honor, the center of the Jubilee no Philadelphian ever will forget.

A few minutes before midnight the dials of the clock under Billy Penn's iron feet flashed through the downfall. The freezing rain stopped the hands on the north face of the tower, but the other three mechanisms worked well. The Salvation Army band leader warned his musicians to be alert and warmed the mouthpiece of his cornet under his arm as he watched the clock. Two sports opened a window in the Hotel Bellevue and offered the band a consideration to play "Hot Time in the Old Town," but the man with the cornet muttered something which sounded like, "There's a hotter time a-coming, my brothers."

The hands of the big clock closed, shearing off the old year. The band leader's horn bobbed a downbeat. "O God, Our Help in Ages Past" the frostbitten lips and fingers played, and so the year of Our Lord, Eighteen Hundred and Ninety-nine, came to Broad and Walnut streets.

Warren slumped back in his chair and looked at Seth Thomas's pendulum flirting by the sunburst in the glass.

"Eighteen ninety-nine," he whispered to himself and to Seth.

. . . Clocks and heartbeats made time audible, that was all. Time was something else again, something which fell just short of infinity. And calendars were merely devices to compute compound interest. . . .

He dropped his copy into the basket on the city editor's desk and paused, yawning. Somebody had given Picklepuss a Christmas gift of Robert Browning's poems which he had forgotten to take home or to lose. Warren picked up the book and leafed through it, too tired to remain standing, too idly distracted to sit down, yet postponing the detestable necessity of going home when Susan would not be there.

And so, standing, he read Rabbi Ben Ezra for the first time. "The best is yet to be . . . for which the first was made."

When he put the book down he tore a sheet of notepaper from a pad, wrote on it slowly and with still intervals when he merely stared at the pencil. Then he tucked what he had written into the book at the page which had held him and went home in the cold. The note said:

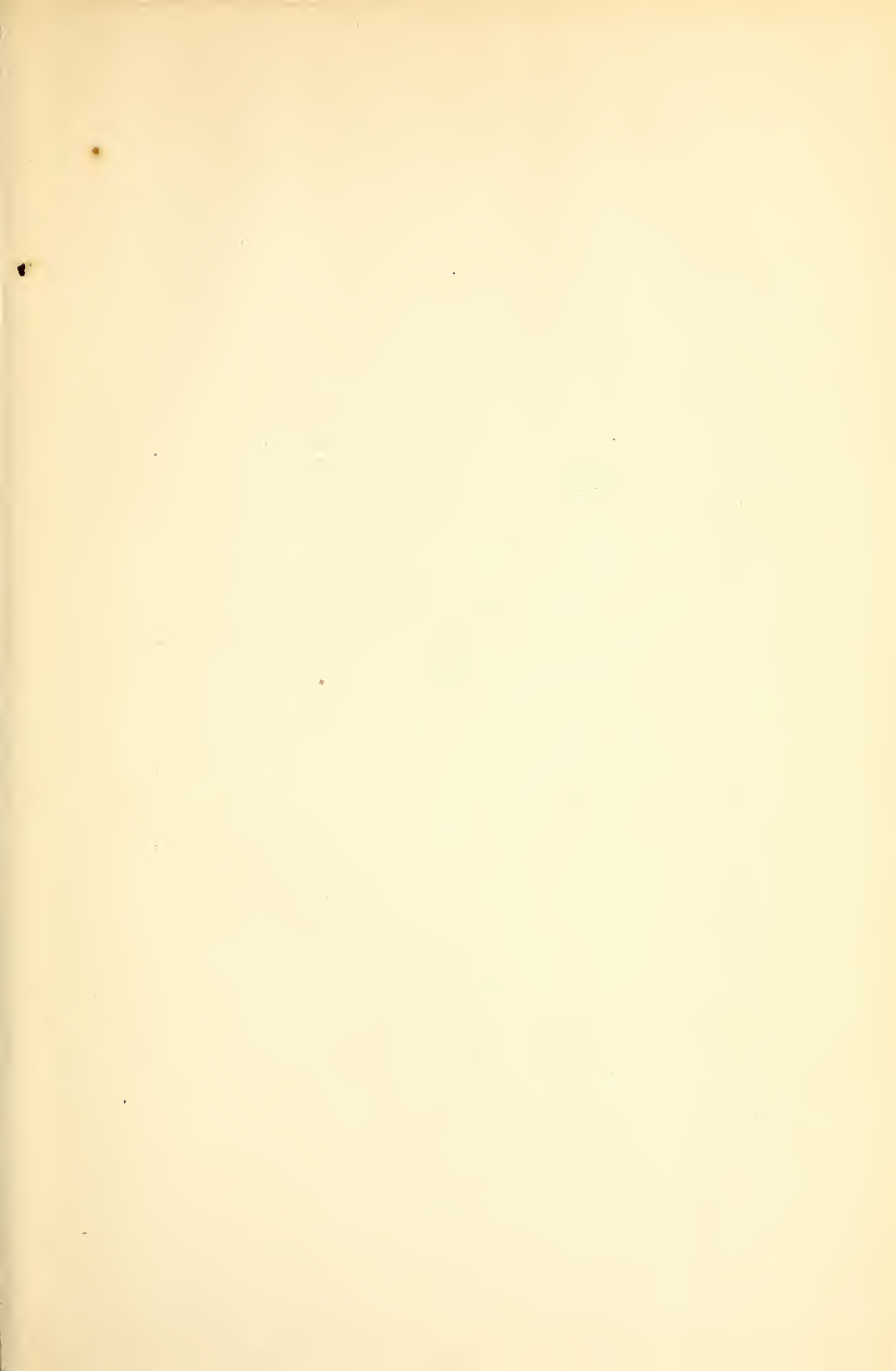
This looks like a good book.

There never was nor will be such a time as The Good Old Days. "The best is yet to be . . . for which the first was made," this guy says, and that's right, by God.

The fellow who yearns for auld lang syne is a poop whom the past has bankrupted, and for whom the present holds nothing but fears.

The future? . . . "Our times are in his hand Who saith 'A whole I planned . . . see all, nor be afraid!'"

How about letting me have this book before it gets any more beer rings?





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